The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs
FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS
Editors:
PHILIP BURNHAM EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor*
MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor*
JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager*

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Week by Week

EVEN the amateur in sociology does not expect agreement among its authorities; and anyone who has attempted actual social work knows how perplexing the conflict is among the various factors contributing to any social problem. Hence, it is no surprise to find that the National Conference of Social Work, meeting in Seattle, has uncovered deep differences in diagnosis and technique. Some legitimate surprise, however, may be allowed the onlooker at the sweeping nature of certain of the denials being voiced: especially if, like us, the onlooker has never been able to accustom himself to the impatience, the lack of caution and balance, of one type of scientific mind. Thinking of science as a slow and careful proving-ground, he is never prepared for the dramatic enthusiasms and especially the dogmatic repudiations, which have become a part of public scientific history. The current example is furnished in Seattle by Mr. Saul D. Alinsky, of the Chicago Institute for Juvenile Delinquency, who waves away with one gesture almost every agency attempting to deal with the young potential criminal on an individual basis.

Teeter-Totter

"THE COURT, the clinic, the school, the social agency, the settlement house and character-building agencies," boys' clubs, police bureaus and so forth, "which are working on the basis of dealing with the individual offender," are, according to Mr. Alinsky, "a complete failure." Only a basic change in group environment will, he believes, solve our youth-crime problem. Mention is lacking in the news story of religion, the most vital of these character-building agencies; but it seems fair to suppose that it, too, is classed as "a complete failure." The first answer to this simply must be what Alice said to the Red Queen "very loud and very decidedly"—to wit, "Nonsense!" Every sane person wants a bad environment changed as quickly as society can change it. But how difficult it is to be patient with any social scientist whose researches have led him to throw the individual overboard! This is not only to be blind to all that is significant and really human in human history; it is to start the old wearying teeter-totter between extremes going again. Determinism – individualism: individualism – determinism: when one is in, the other must be out. Observation and judgment alike teach us that both factors enter profoundly into moral development; that the power of moral choice is organic, and can be made to triumph, by steady growth, over blindly conditioning factors. But aside from this, common horse sense should lead us to suspect a theory which assumes to save the individual by discarding at the start the free agency which gives the individual his only meaning.

Ever-Normal Warehouses

WALL STREET'S customary anticipation of a business rise coincided with the inauguration of the latest spend-lend program. With $1,000,000,000, allocated for WPA wages — ultimately for food and shelter — more than $1,000,000,000 for public works projects, $350,000,000 in various loans and grants to farmers, $300,000,000 for heavy industry materials and $300,000,000 additional for low-cost housing, American business is now due for a temporary boost. But what will keep the nation's producers moving when the latest government stimulus has spent itself? There seems to be little reason to expect anything but a further slump once the effects of pump-priming have again worn off. Mordecai Ezekiel, economic adviser to the Department of Agriculture, would allay these fears by launching a definite five-year program of production designed to increase the

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national output by at least one-fifth, absorb a good part of the unemployed and provide the added goods and services normally required by the 4,000,000 new urban and rural families established in the last nine depression years. Government funds would take up the unsold surpluses due to optimistic estimates of increased national purchasing power and store them in government warehouses to make up production deficits in other years. But, unlike annual crop deficiencies due to unpredictable natural conditions, undersupplies of manufactured goods can be replenished in the course of a few weeks. And it is difficult to see the virtue of further concentration of control of the nation's major industries. We should frankly recognize with Mr. Ezekiel, however, that the latest recovery measures constitute not a well-rounded plan, but a necessary stop-gap; we should utilize the afforded breathing spell to work at something permanently constructive.

Destroying the Civil Service

THERE has been much criticism of the present administration on the ground that it is "destroying" the civil service and particularly that it has used the jobs created by the many new alphabetic agencies for strictly political purposes. There is no question but what the latter part of this criticism could be, in many instances, justified. There have been a lot of new government jobs, and knowing the "right" people has been, as always, a great help if you wanted to get one. The excuse alleged for all this was that to apply civil service methods to staffing the new agencies would greatly delay their becoming effectively active and therefore would be futile in the national emergency which created the necessity for them. In this excuse there was also some justice. Then the Reorganization Bill produced a storm of protest because of the changes it proposed in the administration of the civil service. Indeed, criticism of these proposed changes played no little part in creating the pressure under which Congress rejected the bill. This same Congress also destroyed one time-honored field of federal patronage when it put all postmasterships of the first, second and third class under civil service rules. And now the President, by his executive order of June 24, has put all the employees of the alphabetical agencies out of politics as well. When this executive order has been put into effect, there will remain only about 100,000—12 percent of the total—federal jobs outside the merit system. Some of these are "policy-making" executives; most are laborers without ratings and casual workers whom it would be almost impossible to include in any civil service system. Of course it is true that all this merely perpetuates a great number of jobs which were political in the first instance, and the only credit which can properly be given the administration for what it has done is to say that it has acted with enlightened self-interest. Yet anything which promotes the extension of a classified civil service represents a genuine gain.

The President's Castor Oil

THE THIRTEENTH fireside talk, as one reads it over afterward, and after reading comments on it, is a surprisingly reasonable document with most of which it would be very difficult reasonably to disagree. The President once more affirms his belief in the democratic principle of two-party government—with two parties which really stand for differing attitudes. "It is my hope that everybody affiliated with any party will vote in the primaries, and that every such voter will consider the fundamental principles for which his party is on record. That makes for a healthy choice between the candidates of the opposing parties on election day in November. An election cannot give a country a firm sense of direction if it has two or more national parties which merely have different names, but are as alike in their principles and aims as peas in the same pod." Mr. Roosevelt proposes to implement this desire for a genuine two-party system by giving his full support to the more liberal Democratic candidates in this fall's primaries, so that the Democratic party may "purge" itself of those conservatives who should logically be in opposition. What is there so rabble-rousing or terrifying or dishonest in such an attitude? Yet one would judge from the reaction of most of the press that the President had committed another heinous breach of political morality. There are many aspects of the New Deal which demand careful scrutiny and vigorous criticism, and a clearer political line-up would promote that, but the type of comment which greeted the last fireside talk was all too often merely visceral.

Building Going Up

HOUSING, for eight years the economic hope in depression, has been doing relatively better during the recession. From April to May residential building went up 4 percent, while last year during that month it fell off 22.5 percent. Reports of the FHA and the new United States Housing Authority show much of this activity in greater detail. The FHA was four years old on June 27, and in those four years its gross business has been about $2,500,000,000. Insured mortgages on small houses come to $1,825,000,000. Insured loans for modernization and improvement equal $610,000,000, and insured loans on large-scale, low cost apartments, $85,000,000. Currently more than 3,500 homes are being financed under the FHA plan weekly, and, according to Administrator McDonald, "we

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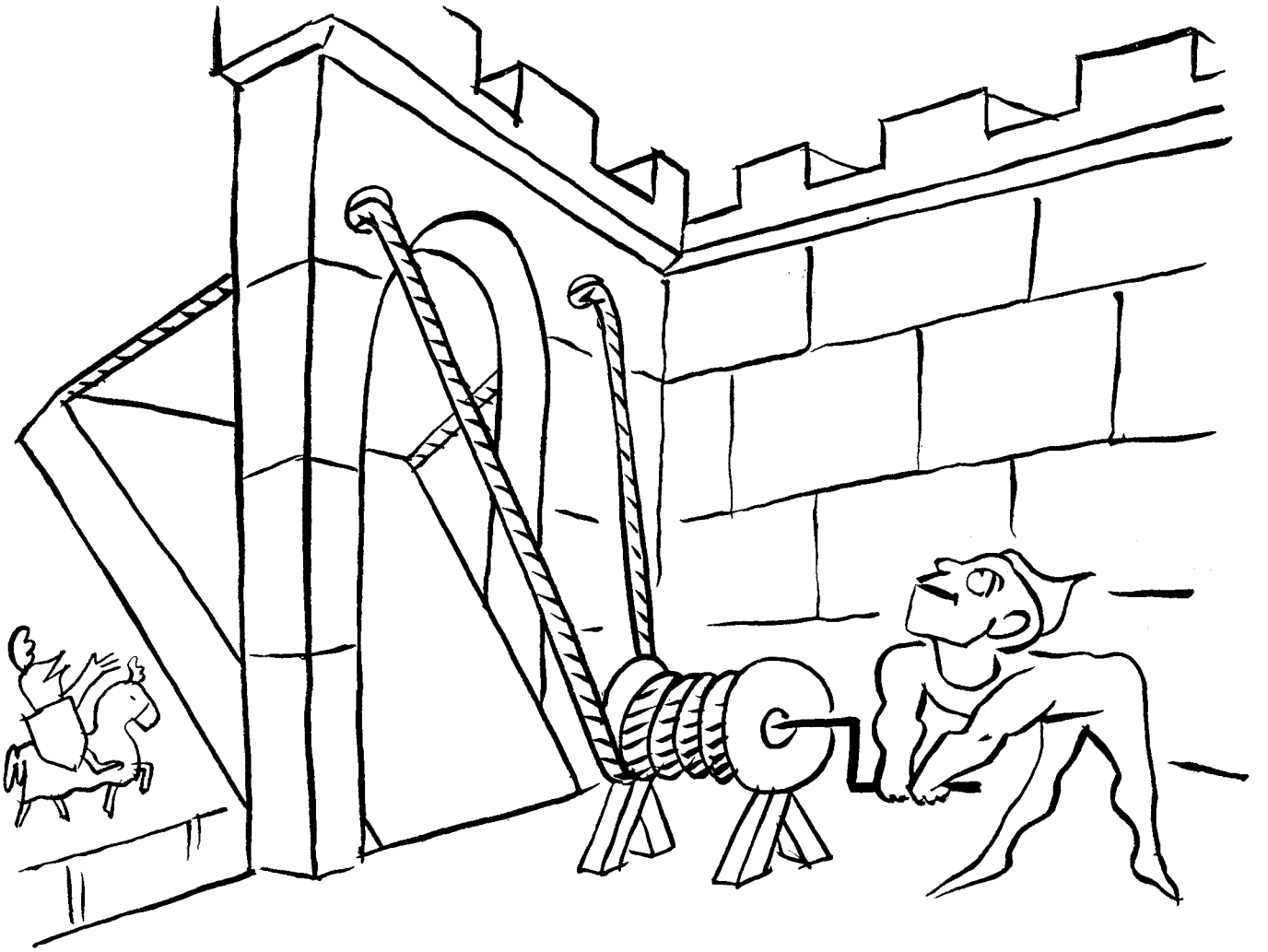

"Yes Sir! The Machine Age!"

will have $150,000,000 worth of large-scale projects under way by the end of the year. I think that will be trebled next year." The U.S.H.A., which makes loans to cities up to 90 percent of the cost of housing projects, was originally provided with $500,000,000. During the last session, Congress raised this to $800,000,000. It has already made loan contracts of $111,070,000 and earmarked $247,304,000. Administrator Straus expects to be spending $25,000,000 a month by winter, "and by next March we should be spending $50,000,000 a month." It is wonderful to be in a business that wants to spend money. But it does seem true that if the housing industry does manage to spend an enormous amount of money wisely, in the right places and with good plans, the present system of economy will revive and one of the most obvious complaints against the democratic "American system" will be silenced. New housing is necessary—16,297,000 dwelling units in the next twelve years, experts say—and our way of doing things has to be maneuvered to provide a colossal amount of it.

The United States and Armaments

NEWS items of the week reveal two contrary tendencies in the nation's relations toward the world rearmament race. The Business Research Institute of Berlin disclosed that during the past year the United States had passed Great Britain to become the world's largest exporter of war materials. This rise to first place was due primarily to the sales of American planes and airplane motors. Another indication of increased armament activity is the report that President Roosevelt has instructed Admiral Leahy to speed up the new Navy expansion program. On the other hand it is reported that our sales of scrap iron and steel to Japan have fallen off about 40 percent for the first five months of 1938. In the inauguration of the naval expansion program Mr. Roosevelt and officials of the Navy Department have agreed that at this time we are not justified in constructing battleships of more than 35,000 tons—the limit set by the treaty with France and Britain in 1936. Finally the President

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told a Hyde Park press conference that the administration's national defense plans were not conceived as measures toward recovery and re-employment, but rather as primarily military and naval objectives. He cited the experience of countries which are rearming much more heavily to substantiate his conviction that arms expenditures have no permanent capital value. America will contribute far more to world peace by curtailing her exports of armaments and other war materials and by restricting her own armament expenditures to a reasonable and studied defense program than by the "holier-than-thou" sentiments that have in recent years characterized so many public utterances by distinguished Americans about the sorry condition of the rest of the world.

Auto Labor and Industry

HOMER MARTIN, leader of the second largest C.I.O. union, told the Camp Tamiment gathering in Pennsylvania more about his struggles within the United Automobile Workers Union and the purposes he has for his organization. Long harried by opposition groups, and distressed by strikes unauthorized by his office, President Martin has been carrying his fight against regular Communists from the union's executive committee to every local. Insisting on disciplined conformity with industrial agreements and the barring of "those who place the welfare of alien and extraneous organizations above the union," he proclaimed a finish fight against Stalinists, who, in turn, label him a disruptive Lovestoneite opposition Communist. While warring with the C.P., he offered peace overtures to the A.F.L., and asserted that "neither sit-down strikes nor any other strikes are necessary if employers are willing to abide by the principles of collective bargaining and the practises of democracy." At the same time a new automobile part company was being formed in Owosso, Michigan, on the ashes of the A. G. Redmond Company, which was put out of business in Flint by labor troubles with the U.A.W. As outlined, the plan for the new corporation is remarkably cooperative, giving employees a status which sounds like a thoroughly new departure. Employer and employee will have the same rights and be governed by the same rules, and no person will be able to discharge another. A flexible wage agreement is the center of the Owosso plan, providing a basic annual wage with an addition of 20 percent before the owners can take money from the enterprise. Corporate income above that is split evenly by workers and owners until the employees' share adds 30 percent to the basic guaranteed wage. An extension and perfection of such plans as this seems to be, would undoubtedly solve many of Mr. Martin's problems, and some sharp ones of labor and industry in general.

New Sweden

THERE was a quality about the anniversary celebration in Delaware, when the first coming of the Swedes and Finns to the continent was commemorated and the granite monument given by Sweden was dedicated, which is now rare in American life. There was something nostalgic about the formality, the deliberate and solemn honoring of our forefathers, the praise of pioneers, the boasts of our traditions. It is good to keep the springs of our national life clear and to attach ourselves to the strong elements of our history. Without such historical memory the country lacks self-knowledge and understanding of the historical process in which it still lives; its life has no dimensions; its values are needlessly limited and flat. The Swedes, Finns and Americans at Fort Christina State Park gracefully and with real—and public, even "liturgical"—feeling brought to mind the contributions to the United States of the great Baltic states. New Sweden lasted politically only seventeen years after the landing on March 29, 1638, of the pioneers from Sweden and Finland, which was then part of Sweden. America has included something of Sweden and Finland from then onward, however, and in the migrations of the nineteenth century, people and qualities of those countries became powerful minority parts of the nation. The President and Secretary of State told how welcome those elements of America are now here, and how this country has always remained completely friendly to their homelands, "a true friendship under which we have lived from the earliest times unmarred by any rift, unbroken by any misunderstanding."

Finding Your Way Around

VACATION time is upon us, and the popularity of the motoring trip through some part of America as a solution for the "vacation problem" is fully as great as ever. What undoubtedly was a great need has at least partly been filled—the need for competent and reliable guide-books to our own country. One of the most useful of the many undertakings of the Federal Writers' Project of the WPA has been the preparation of various guides, which are now beginning to be published. The Viking Press has already published Delaware and Mississippi and announces Iowa and Minnesota for the near future. Houghton Mifflin has published the six New England States and New Orleans. Random House will publish the first volume of New York City in the early fall. Washington, D. C., may be obtained from the Government Printing Office. All of these guides follow more or less the same form and sell at about the same price—$2.50. One very interesting feature in most of them is a careful yet popularly written geological descrip-

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tion of each state or region, a matter on which most of us are profoundly ignorant and often misinformed. Along purely geological lines is also an admirably prepared brochure called "Yellowstone through the Ages," just issued by the Columbia University Press. One of the happy by-products of the depression has been to supply us with the literary means whereby to "see America first."

Only in England—

IT CANNOT be said that our English cousins consistently prove their claim to top rank in the matter of orderly liberty. They deserve the enduring thanks of civilization for formulating the ideal. But now and again their censorship clamps down on plays or publications in a way that to the outsider is simply unintelligible; or some even more sinister manifestation, like the recent Whitechapel riots, takes place, to confound the trusting observer overseas. But when they put on an act such as has just been staged by the Oxford City Council, the balance is restored once more. Only in England, one realizes, could such a thing take place. Sitting upon the case of a private realty corporation which had erected a double wall between itself and the municipal grounds where less privileged children played, the Oxford Council decreed that said wall—enclosing a lane of some dimensions—must come down. The corporation refused to pull it down, so the Council sent a wrecking crew to do it. The corporation countered by sending a crew of bricklayers to replace the bricks as fast as they were dislodged. Naturally the populace turned out to watch the contest, which consumed the entire day; but the significant thing is that it was regarded as a sporting event, and that the police who were detailed to keep order merely kept order—they did not interfere in the competition. Cheered on by a thousand watching housewives, the wreckers early took the lead; and as the sun set, they smartly removed the last brick, winning the game. This is what the bobby, in books at least, always talks about; this is Law and Order.

Gifts

By AGNES REPPLIER

I WAS eleven years old and I was sorely troubled. The first cloud that had darkened my life since I had been sent to school was hanging heavily over me, and I could not understand what it meant. Something had come between me and the five friends who made up my share of happiness. There was a sense of estrangement that bewildered me. It seemed to me that they wished I would not dash so impetuously at them the instant the recreation bell rang. I fancied in my more stricken moments that they had something in common from which I was excluded; and if this were true, what was there left for me in life!

It would have been useless to urge that there were over a hundred children in the school, and that many of them were my age and companionable. They were not the chosen friends of my heart. It would have been worse than useless to have suggested that I might, if I chose, have found my studies a trifle more interesting, or that I might have made friends with some of the kindly disposed nuns. Lessons in those remote days were not designed to interest, but to instruct; and nuns suffered from the inescapable misfortune of being grown-up.

Happily there was an interest stirring in the convent which banished individual calamities from our minds. We, the school-children, were about to send a gift to Pope Pius IX, by way of assuring him, first of our existence, and next of our unswerving loyalty. The gift would take the form of money, which we were expected to extract from our parents; but the fashion in which it was to be sent was much talked over by nuns and chaplain. The plan first adopted was a silver boat, in honor of Saint Peter's craft, freighted with gold dollars. This would have been symbolic and appropriate; but the idea expanded, I know not how, into a beautiful little brig (so at least it was called), with very complicated rigging. The dollars were packed away in the hold and on deck.

I may add that these dollars had not been raised with the ease which we expected. We were so enthusiastic that the apathy of our parents seemed to us incredible. A few fathers (widowers as a rule) sent money with apparent pleasure; but in the letters of most of them there was a shadow of moroseness which I now understand. It is not possible that the mail of 1868 contained the extraordinary assortment of begging letters which today sends the postman staggering to our doors; but I doubt not that the custom is a very old one. It is probable that a great many Assyrian gentlemen of moderate means were asked with cruel insistence to endow a new school for the clarifying of cuneiform inscriptions, or to subscribe to a pension fund for decrepit female slaves. But the demands must have begun and ended with the presumed needs of Assyria. Now begging letters come to us from every corner of the habitable globe, and from a few corners which we are asked to make habitable by our subscriptions. They help us to understand the attitude of our fathers who in 1868 said they did not see what a sick and sad old man would want with a silver gilt brig. The money was all very well, but the boat?

Had it been given them to see the chambers in which were spread the jubilee gifts sent from all over the world to Victoria and to Leo XIII, their

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doubts would have been even more emphatic. No one can ever know how many undesirable things are produced by human hands unless he has seen such a collection. There were hundreds of "offerings" to the Queen and hundreds more to the Pontiff, and there was nothing that any sane man or woman could have used for any conceivable purpose. When I call them to mind, I am disposed to think that our little ship was appealingly simple and beautiful.

To us, at least, it was a flawless possession. Two of the graduates brought it to the Second Cour so that we younger children might see it at our leisure. Of course we made a rush for the table on which it was placed, and one of its tall guardians said authoritatively: "Don't crowd so. There is plenty of time. And let those little girls whose fathers gave the most, like Elizabeth Rollins and Maggie McGuire, have a chance to look at it."

Now when I heard those words I knew that there was something wrong about them, though I could not have said intelligently what it was. As usual I looked about me for enlightenment, and I got it.

Maggie, a good-natured child of whose existence I was barely aware, was pushing forward, her round red face wreathed with smiles. But Elizabeth, where was she? A moment before she had been elbowing her way by my side, as excited and as determined as the rest of us. Now she had slunk to the rear. Her forehead wore that curious scowl, so rare and yet so well understood. To a neighbor who was polite enough to make room for her she said brusquely, "I don't want to see the old thing."

"The old thing"! Our beautiful new brig! When I heard those words, and saw Elizabeth's scowl, my doubts as to the graduate's words took form and weight. I had received an object lesson in breeding which would last me all my life.

And now that our little ship had gone to Rome, and our interest in it had faded away, my own secret trouble remained. More than ever—so it seemed to me—my friends evaded my companionship, and more than ever I felt that there was no escape from my unhappiness. I was approaching my twelfth birthday, a circumstance which did not interest me at all. Birthdays in my family had never been well kept; though my mother, remembering that this would be my first away from home, had kindly sent me a gift which arrived a long time ahead. It was a French prayer-book, a "Paroissien Romain," beautifully bound and clasped. I had shown it proudly to all my friends and neighbors; but though everyone admitted its perfection, no one looked at it with longing eyes. Elizabeth had a "Paroissien" already, though it was not so handsome as mine (my mother had a flair for the framing of a picture and the binding of a book), and every child in the convent possessed one or two prayer-books of her own.

Three weeks before my birthday Eloise Didier had reached her thirteenth, and her worldly minded mother had sent her a brooch, a little gold palette with two red and two blue stones sunk in it to represent paint—a combination of realism and art which left nothing to be desired. I knew that my prayer-book was beautiful; but I also knew that it had kindled no enthusiasm as did Eloise Didier's pin. Even the fact that it was French militated against its charm. We did not easily forgive France her choice of a tongue.

When my birthday arrived (I was a *poisson d'Avril*), my breakfast plate was heaped with the little pious prints framed in lace paper which are the specialty of convents, and which Charles II was wont to seek in Paris for the entertainment of his wife, the devout Catherine of Braganza. We always sent them to our schoolmates on anniversaries, partly because they were cheap enough to come within our slender means, and partly because they were the only inutilities sold in the bazar which was our sole emporium, open once a week for the benefit of those who had any money to spend.

After breakfast came study hours and English classes, and after them a brief half-hour of recreation. When the bell rang I saw Elizabeth leave her desk, and hurry to my side. At the same minute Marie and Lilly and Tony and Emily sprang to attention. Elizabeth had a small white box.

"For Heaven's sake take it," she said. "We had the most awful time finishing them, for you never gave us a chance. There was no getting rid of you. We actually had to hide in the music rooms, or they would not be here now."

Stunned by these reproaches, trembling with the anticipation of a great delight, I snapped the string. There they lay, five handkerchiefs, hemstitched and embroidered (to the extent of a staggering A) by the five most inexpert children in the school. They were dreadfully done. The hemstitching was a thing of gaps and hedges, and the A was frankly drunk. But to me, reinstated in all that I held dear, they were the loveliest objects in the world. I clutched them tight, and tried to say a few words of thanks, but my voice shook, and I was so afraid of crying (which would have disgraced me forever) that it was not much louder than a whisper. I glanced at my companions. They showed the relief they felt, and, I fancy, were registering a vow never again to do anything so troublesome. Only Tony looked at me queerly, her sparkling eyes grown soft. Alone of the five she guessed at my felicity, though she could never have known that I was living through the happiest moment of my life, and that I was sure (having a prophetic turn of mind) that I should never be so completely happy again.

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Japan's Failure

[Editor's Note: Reprinted by permission from the *New Statesman and Nation,* London, which describes the author as being "a correspondent who is now living in North China and who has an intimate knowledge of the country."]

THE JAPANESE have three main problems. One is to shut off from the rest of the world the parts of China which they have overrun, to create a vacuum as far as news, and to some extent as trade, is concerned. Another, which is essential for the conduct of the war as well as for purposes of future pacification, is to secure effective political control of the areas actually occupied, that is, the big cities and the railway system, including a belt of territory about five miles each side of the lines. Last, and most important of all, is the task of extending their control over the hinterland which lies between the railways and behind the Japanese front line. The problems are stated in the order in which the Japanese have been successful in solving them, not in the order of the importance or difficulty.

Once the imperial army has destroyed organized opposition the methods of conquest depend mainly on the Japanese bureaucracy. A bureaucracy uncontrolled by public opinion may be a nuisance at home, but it is a powerful instrument for oppression abroad. Presented with the problem of isolating China from the rest of the world, the Japanese bring to their task the experience not only of their own country but also of Korea and Manchuria. Within a few days of military occupation they turn the whole of the area into a strictly controlled territory from which it is difficult to send news and in which it is almost impossible to get reliable information. Their chief reliance is upon control of communications: transportation, the press, the mails, the film, radio, theatre and education.

Physical communications were naturally taken over first, but it is calculated that the unusually high proportion of two-thirds of the Japanese armies now in China are engaged in defending them. Next came the press and the censorship of mails. Those who knew the Chinese press are not likely to waste much sentiment on this, for apart from the *Ta Kung Pao,* the *Manchester Guardian* of China, there was no nation-wide paper of high standing. Most papers were of low grade and technically inefficient. Circulations were modest; even the *Ta Kung Pao,* some thirty years old, boasted of no more than 50,000 copies in Tientsin and 10,000 in Shanghai. But during the last few months the Chinese press has changed its character completely. In Japanese-controlled areas a large number of Chinese newspapers, particularly those without a sound financial basis, as well as the more important dailies which lost their experienced personnel, have disappeared. The press which remains is strictly controlled. After eliminating all those persons who might take the initiative in anti-Japanese activities—and the number of arrests has been considerable—the Japanese promulgated and strictly enforced a set of censorship regulations, nominally the decrees of Chinese puppet administrations, concerning the press, film, theatre and even gramophone records. By this means they secure a platform for propaganda as well as the machinery with which to prevent the expression of pro-Chinese or anti-Japanese sentiments. Since these regulations came into force the Chinese press has become so colorless and uniform that the circulation has dropped, an unlooked for consequence which has been met by measures forcing people to subscribe.

There is one gap in the system of censorship and control. It is caused by the presence in China of correspondents and news agencies which belong to countries enjoying rights of extraterritoriality, particularly England and America. This is the struggle which is going on now in Shanghai, where resistance to the Japanese censorship is stronger than it has been in Peking or Tientsin. But more serious for the Japanese are the foreign embassies which have their own radio stations through which they can send and receive messages and some of which handle messages for newspaper correspondents. Nothing can be done about the embassies, but things are made as difficult as possible for foreign correspondents by censorship of the mails, the radio and telegraph, by personal intimidation and temporary arrests. Offices of foreign-owned newspapers published in China are continually being attacked by bomb throwers. But so far the gap in the censorship system remains.

Meanwhile, every attempt is made to extend Japanese propaganda. In education, the middle schools are rigidly supervised and provided with new textbooks. The three Japanese journals in Shanghai have been amalgamated in order to coordinate their work, and a Chinese edition added to extend their circulation. *Domei,* the official Japanese news agency, has enlarged its Japanese, Chinese and English news services and has by now probably the most extensive network of correspondents in the Far East. *Domei* is aiming at the elimination of all foreign news services in China, especially of Reuters, which is now, of course, thoroughly censored, at least in the occupied areas.

The comparative success of the Japanese in controlling intellectual communications in the occupied areas has not been matched by any corresponding success in solving the political problem.

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The main political objective of the Japanese armies is the elimination of the Kuomintang. But something must be put in its place. It is not enough merely to set up the organs of government, as has been done, in Peking and Nanking; there must be a new political philosophy to take the place of Sun Yat Sen's Three Principles of the People. It does not matter whether the conquered population believes this philosophy or not, but they must at least pay lip service to it and allow their children to be brought up in its principles. The new political theory gives an air of legitimacy to the bare facts of military conquest; it is designed to maintain Japanese and undermine Chinese morale. The recent refusal of Japanese troops to destroy Chinese villages is an indication that mere love of conquest and destruction does not carry troops through an arduous campaign. And what happens in the "ideological front" is important not only for the larger political problem of government but also for the future expansion from the railways to the hinterland. The fate of the Japanese attempt to rule China through puppet regimes will vary not only with the tide of battle, but with the reaction to political propaganda.

The Hsin Min Huei, or New People's Society, sits crowned on the grave of the Kuomintang. Several months of propaganda culminated in March in what was called a T'o Tang Huei, or "Leaving the Kuomintang" Movement. Former members were given the opportunity of publicly celebrating their resignations, nor was the joy of the occasion marred by any threats against those who failed to do so. And those who teach the young have naturally been given every chance to learn about the principles of the Hsin Min Huei so that there shall be no time lost in transmitting them to the rising generation. A Hsin Min University has graduated sixty students after four months' training and sent them to finishing schools in Japan; this is the beginnings of a new Chinese bureaucracy. Indeed it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of the Hsin Min Huei to the Japanese in their effort to control thought, intimidate the intellectuals and discredit the Kuomintang. They do not expect large numbers of people to join the movement and they are well aware that every Chinese knows that it is a thin cover for Japan's real purposes.

The Hsin Min Huei preaches what is called the New People's Principle. The principle but not the name is new. Hsin Min is a term with many associations; it means, in Chinese historical contexts, to conquer a people and regenerate them. The Hsin Min principle is an extraordinary addition to the intellectual life of the world. According to this principle all things like to live but have varying powers of resistance; the good are strong and the weak are bad; Heaven allows the good to grow and weak to die. It is bound up with the Kingly Way, which includes getting rid of selfishness, making sure of right knowledge and avoiding Marxism, being sincere, regulating the heart, and being correct in the important relations, such as those between husband and wife, parents and children, for those who do not understand these things follow the class war. Western equality between men and women is opposed to the will of Heaven; hence the foolishness of the three Sung sisters ruling China. In politics, government and religion must be combined. In western countries capitalists support parties which control the government and run it for their own private profit; but an Italian experience shows that one-party government can be good if the leader is good. The voice of the Japanese peasant in uniform can be traced in what follows: the Hsin Min principle will do away with capitalist monopoly, it will make machines fit men, not men fit machines, it will do away with big cities and all their evils and take machinery to the villages, it will think first of the profit of the people, not of the capitalist.

The most important aspect of Japanese policy that this rather involved "principle" throws light upon is one not always properly emphasized, that is, the danger to Japanese institutions of a China which is culturally becoming more and more American and English and is basing its nationalism on anti-Japanese feeling. Chiang Kai-shek cannot be forgiven because, according to the Hsin Min principle, he stole authority, destroyed old Chinese culture, and formed an alliance with the Communists. China must go back, according to the same argument, to Confucius; the Japanese are shedding their blood because China did not have the strength to resist the West. English has already been replaced by Japanese as a second language. And the revival of Confucianism is going forward in an attempt to enlist the support of Chinese who disliked the Kuomintang and disapproved of the new styles in marriage and the break up of the old family system. It is a powerful appeal, but it appeals to the old, not to the young; in fact, to make a very conservative estimate, there is nothing in the Hsin Min principle which appeals to any Chinese below the age of forty. And in China a man is old at fifty.

The aims of the Hsin Min Huei are clearer than its principles. They are, to protect the authority of the provisional government, to develop the resources of China, which is naturally rich but lacking in capital and technique, to plan for Sino-Japanese peace on the basis of Confucianism, to join in opposition to the Kuomintang and the Communists, and lastly, to form alliances with friendly peoples such as those of Japan, Manchukuo and Mengjukuo. China's resources together with Japan's armies will make it possible, it is

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claimed, to oppose the U.S.S.R. and avoid being a colony of the western powers. These aims are frank and intelligible, they are a representative statement of what the Japanese would like to do. But they are not good propaganda, even among the extensive reactionary groups which undoubtedly exist, from whom so much was hoped and so little received. It was the object of the conquest, the attempt to eliminate not only the government but every new idea which had taken root in China since the coming of the West, which demanded the creation of a Hsin Min Huei and the elaboration of a new political theory. But the very object of the conquest guarantees its ultimate failure. It is an impossible task to set up a new government over the whole of China, to undo all the education of the last twenty-five years and restore the social and political ideas of the fifth century B.C. to a country of 400,000,000 people, while exploiting them with the methods of twentieth century A.D. Yet these are the aims that the Japanese army has set itself to achieve.

The problem of the hinterland is clearly bound up with that of the areas actually occupied; the latter question must be solved in such a way as to make possible a solution of the former. But to restore order and government to the vast areas between the railways requires men, money and sympathy, none of which things the Japanese have. Most important of all, it requires time, a gift which the rapidly moving international scene is not likely to grant. Nor is there any encouragement to be drawn from such precedents as exist. With more favorable conditions in Manchuria, a thinly populated country with no considerable body of dispersed soldiery operating behind the lines, the Japanese are still, after seven years, suppressing "banditry." The problem of the peasantry is not confined to maintaining order, it is more a question of social and economic reconstruction, which the Kuomintang, with all the advantages of a legitimate government commanding the services of thousands of officials, was only beginning to make an impression upon before the Lukouchiao incident. In fact, there are some grounds for believing that if the Japanese had not come in, the government would before long have had to face the possibility of active agrarian revolt in the villages. As it is now, if all Japanese troops were withdrawn tomorrow a Chinese government would find itself faced with conditions, except for certain areas under the Communists, worse than those of the most terrible civil war years. The breakdown of organized local governments has been accompanied not only by the revival of banditry, but also by the neglect of river conservancy and irrigation, which means flood and famine on a large scale. The Japanese method has done more than put the clock back, it has almost stopped it.

The hinterland is largely a question, for the Japanese, of communications. The more complex the system of physical and intellectual communications the easier it is to use the forces of propaganda and education to consolidate the achievements of military power. In the narrow strips of occupied territory all the usual methods of maintaining political authority in the modern way are employed. But in the hinterland complex communications do not exist. Even before the war the daily press was hardly a factor in the country districts, where 98 percent of the Chinese live, for only one person in a thousand received a copy of a daily newspaper. The press, therefore, is not a serious factor as a weapon to win over the villages to the advantages of Japanese rule. Nor is education, unless every town of any importance is garrisoned, for education was largely concentrated in urban centers and textbooks can be changed only under military pressure. The film is equally useless, because the cinema has not yet spread from the big centers of population, and in any case the production of appropriate propaganda films takes time and money. Radio is more important. Before the conflict the Nanking government had encouraged the establishment of receiving sets in the villages, large crowds would listen to the broadcasts from Nanking and other centers, afterward spreading the news by word of mouth. But this factor, at the moment, is operating against the Japanese, who can interfere with the Chinese broadcasts only to a limited extent.

Under these conditions it is extremely difficult to get into contact with the hinterland by means of intellectual communications. And physical communications present even greater problems for troops which depend upon mechanized transport and artillery units. It is no accident that the armies have followed the railways and rarely venture more than a day's trip from their tracks. Up to the present the only news that the hinterland has had of the Japanese is the burning of villages, the raping of women, the seizure of property and the impressment of labor.

In theory, it might be claimed, the Japanese have a choice of two alternatives in relation to the hinterland. One is to garrison the whole of China, including all the main lines of communication, all the big cities and every country town, a course of action which is possible, but which would certainly strain the resources of Japan to the breaking point. The other is to work through the Chinese, to set up a government in the controlled areas which will command respect, attract able officials and have the means to face the enormous problem of organization which the hinterland represents. Taken singly neither solution is very promising, but the Japanese are trying to follow both at the same time, and they have yet to realize that the two are mutually exclusive.

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The New Food and Drug Act

By T. SWANN HARDING

MOST people have perhaps forgotten that a new Food and Drug Law was proposed many years ago at the beginning of the New Deal. Few have been able clearly to follow the transformations and permutations of the bill as it has been scuttled about among committee men.

Many "liberals" feel that legislators simply "sold out to the interests" and permitted the bill to be emasculated. It is scarcely as simple as that. William James in one of his moments of clairvoyance, of which he had a multitude, defined democracy as a system of government in which you do something—and then wait for somebody to set up a howl. Thereupon you apply a remedy—and wait for somebody else to howl about that.

For any group to get its desires enacted into law in a democracy it is necessary that the members of that group be expert at the technique of raising howls. That delightful and sapient philosopher and state senator of Illinois, Professor T. V. Smith, has frequently reminded us that it is the legislator's technical function to equate, and render socially dynamic, the opposing opinions of warring groups.

There have been various groups interested in food and drug legislation, such as the government officials who want a less archaic and more readily enforceable law, the ordinary consumers who wish better protection, the militant consumer pressure groups who hold out for ideal laws it is impossible to have enacted, the more scrupulous manufacturers and advertisers who want regulation to restrain their less scrupulous competitors, and the outlaw fringe who want to do as they please and desire little or no regulation.

All these various groups have been represented at congressional hearings and have howled industriously. If you will stop to imagine the predicament of some senator or representative who has a food, drug, cosmetic and advertising bill in charge, as he faces the discordant cacophony of these howls, and seeks to distil some harmony from their dissonance, you can get a faint idea that merely "selling out to the interests" would not solve the problem.

Now, after a very creditable Food, Drug and Cosmetic Law has been passed by Congress, largely due to the untiring zeal of the late Royal S. Copeland, it would be a foolhardy and a tiresome undertaking even briefly to summarize the history of the various food, drug, cosmetic and advertising bills that have been offered, discussed, proposed and sidetracked these past five or six years. It is enough to review phases of the opposition.

At first the opposition to improved legislation was absolute. No new bill at all was needed or desired. That sort of direct and forthright opposition apparently provoked consumer howls of such distressing quality that it had to be modified. The opposition then took this form: "Of course we want legislation to curb fraud; in fact we want just this kind of a bill."

"This kind of a bill" proved on careful reading always to be something that superficially gave promise of increased consumer protection but actually contained serious loopholes through which almost any kind of abuse could walk without stooping. Meanwhile consumer representatives and their friends in government service and in Congress proposed bills that would be effective.

These bills gained strength and it began to appear as if one of them might pass. The opposition therefore went into a new phase. It sought bit by bit to emasculate whatever bills were in committee which appeared hopeful of passage.

But the advertising provisions of these bills proved a menace in any case. If such a bill passed and if its enforcement were placed in the hands of that expert, conscientious crew in the Food and Drug Administration, advertising might actually have its face washed forcibly and heavy fines and even jail sentences were not out of the reckoning. That would never do.

So a flanking attack was undertaken. The opposition got behind the bill that would give to the Federal Trade Commission the supervision of advertising, at the same time making it fully legal for the commission to construe false and misleading advertising as a form of unfair competition in trade. That bill was dutifully passed.

A great deal was accomplished by the opposition in this flanking movement. First of all, advertising escaped the forthright, consumer-minded regulation that would have been enforced by the Food and Drug Administration officials already expert in dealing with labels. Second, as the American Medical Association noted, responsibility for the regulation of foods, drugs and cosmetics was divided—labels remaining with the Food and Drug Administration, advertisements going to the Federal Trade Commission.

But, as if this were not sufficient aid to the unscrupulous, they made a third gain. The commission's law controlling advertising has retarding rather than accelerating punitive provisions. It is so worded that, before any really effective action is taken against a false and misleading advertiser, he can clean up his advertising. No par-

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ticular advertising campaign has a long life. Fashions and needs change rapidly. Give an advertiser two or three months' use of any specific misleading campaign and that is all he needs.

Nevertheless old S. 5, the Copeland Bill, passed by the Senate, March 10, 1937, remained kicking around in the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Something had to be done about that. Something was done. On April 14, 1938, it was committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

What was done to the bill before the committee reported it out? Report No. 2139 (to accompany S. 5) of the Third Session of the Seventy-fifth Congress pretty well tells the tale. Special attention should be given to the Minority Views signed by six members of the committee who had a genuine desire to see the American people get a worth-while food, drug and cosmetic bill.

This time the attack was most shrewed and subtle. The bill superficially appeared strong. It embraced medical devices and cosmetics as well as foods and drugs. It set up food standards; it got rid of the "false and fraudulent" joker in the therapeutic labeling provisions of the drug section of the present law; it expanded definitions of adulteration and misbranding; it strengthened the procedural provisions by authorizing injunction proceedings. *But*—

First, one minor defect was carried through from the Senate. The trial of seizure cases—and seizure is the most valuable administrative tool the bill gives the government—will in many instances occur in the producing jurisdictions before juries whose sympathies will normally be with local industries.

But second, and most important of all, there was Section 701 (f). This section almost completely emasculated the bill and actually made it such that Secretary of Agriculture Wallace wrote: "It is the department's considered judgment that it would be better to continue the old law in effect than to enact S. 5 with this provision."

Under the bill and under the law as finally passed certain quasi-legislative powers were and are specifically delegated to the Secretary of Agriculture. He is to make certain regulations necessary for enforcing the law. These regulations relate to the following: the identity and quality of food; requirements for the informative labeling of special dietary foods such as used by infants and invalids; food contaminated with disease organisms the distribution of which might result in serious epidemics; the additions of poison to food; the certification of coal-tar colors for use in foods, drugs and cosmetics; the establishment of adequate laboratory tests for important official drugs; the listing of narcotic and habit-forming drugs; label warnings against the probable misuse of dangerously potent drugs; and label directions for the preservation of potent drugs liable to deterioration.

These regulations "constitute the very heart of any worthy food and drug legislation," as the minority of the House committee held. They should be subject, of course, to the usual forms of court review through equity proceedings or proceedings under the Declaratory Judgment Act. It is giving the Secretary of Agriculture quasi-legislative powers to permit him to issue the regulations, it is true, yet, if reasonable and sound, they should be effectively enforceable.

But under Section 701 (f), as the House, at the behest of the rabid apple growers, left it, that could not occur. For the section would have permitted any person who felt himself adversely affected by one of these regulations to file, any time within ninety days after said regulation had been issued, a petition in any of the eighty-five district courts to enjoin the Secretary from enforcing it.

In actuality the provision represented a last-ditch fight by those who sought to protect fresh-fruit growers from a too ardent enforcement of the new law as related to spray residues. These individuals actually took the unscientific stand that poisonous spray residues on fresh fruits and vegetables were very unlikely to harm consumers. They declared also that officials of the Food and Drug Administration had been consumer-minded dictators in their law-enforcement policy.

Fortunately when the bill returned to the Senate, Senator Royal S. Copeland, who had consistently fought like a Trojan for the best possible law he could get through Congress, stood like a rock. Because of the ruthlessly unfair and unjust criticism to which he was subjected he has not yet been given due credit. Unless this insidious provision was altered he refused to push the bill further that session. But congressmen also become weary. They felt that five years of having a Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act dangling was long enough. Senator Copeland's wishes were respected.

The administrative section of the law as finally passed provides that the individual or manufacturer who feels himself aggrieved by some regulation may petition the circuit court of appeals in his own place of residence, or where he has his principal business, for a judicial review of such regulation. This provision is fair enough.

Thus at the very last minute the opposition was squelched. A Food, Drug and Cosmetic Law was passed in which the loopholes of the obsolete law of 1906 are well stopped, and which provides new consumer protection and more effective administrative authority for enforcement. For this successful issue we owe much to Senator Copeland.

In spite of vociferous attacks there is no evidence that the Senator ever "sold out to the interests." He fought steadfastly. He compromised only upon minor points and when ab-

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solutely necessary. In a democracy it is both unwise and impolitic to ride rough-shod over dissenting minorities. The late Senator capped his career by seeing that this bill was made law.

It is unfortunate that the advertising provisions were lost and that the Food and Drug Administration was not charged with the regulation of advertising. It is unfortunate that quality standards for food dropped out by the wayside.

But the new law brings all cosmetics (except soaps), as well as therapeutic devices and agents recommended for abnormalities that are not truly diseases, under control. It prohibits traffic in food that is injurious to health (not merely injurious food to which poisons were added). It authorizes emergency-permit control of food that may become injurious because of contamination with micro-organisms. It forbids traffic in confectionery containing metallic trinkets and other inedible substances.

The new Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act requires far more informative labeling both of food and drug products. It outlaws cosmetics that may be injurious to health, except poisonous coal-tar hair dyes which must bear label warnings. It requires such labeling of dietary and health foods as will acquaint purchasers regarding their true vitamin and mineral content and other nutrient properties.

The new law provides for the promulgation of definitions of identity and standards of quality and fill of container for each food, with certain exemptions. It does not contain the old "distinctive-name" joker in the food sections nor the joker that required the government to prove fraudulent false therapeutic claims on drug products.

It will forestall another "elixir" sulphanilamide disaster by prohibiting traffic in new drugs unless these have been adequately tested to show they are safe for use under conditions prescribed by the labeling. It requires drugs intended for human use to bear label warnings against habit formation if they contain certain listed narcotic or hypnotic drugs. The labels must also bear warnings against such misuse as may endanger health. Finally labels must list the names of active ingedients, showing their quantity and proportion.

Slack-filling and deceptive containers are outlawed. Factory inspections of establishments producing foods, drugs and cosmetics are authorized. Increased criminal penalties for violations are provided. The federal courts are permitted to restrain violators by injunction. Certain provisions relative to the introduction of new drugs and of possibly injurious cosmetics went into effect June 27, when signed by the President. The law as a whole goes into effect twelve months after approval.

The Sad Case of Edmund Wilson

By JOHN ABBOT CLARK

FOR THE past fifteen years, Edmund Wilson has been generally recognized by the intellectualist fringe of the American reading public as our best literary critic—our sanest, most astute, most instructive guide through the chaos that is twentieth-century literature. Because Wilson shows to such brilliant advantage when placed against the backdrop of mill-run American criticism, lavish praise of his books and articles has come to be almost as much a matter of habit with reputable reviewers as blurbing is with the hacks. And since his last collection of papers, "The Triple Thinkers," provoked most of the critics and reviewers to "hallelujahs" and "amens," it seems about time to waive consideration of Wilson's many virtues, forget the pleasure and profit I used to derive from him, forego a natural inclination to be just, and point out in blunt, fragmentary fashion the nature, if not the extent, of Wilson's failure as a literary critic.

Wilson's career has been blighted by his unwillingness (or inability) to take a definite critical position and hold it long enough for everybody concerned to get his second wind. Wilson has said a great many fruitful and penetrating things about the important writers of our time, but one is never quite sure just what they will be fruitful of or how long they will remain penetrating. Wilson's judgments are frequently overruled by Wilson himself, long before the reader has had a sporting chance at them. His juggling of T. S. Eliot is a case in point. In the *Modern Monthly* for February, 1933, Ernest Sutherland Bates wrote:

> In this truly remarkable article ["T. S. Eliot and the Church of England"] Mr. Wilson characterizes Mr. Eliot as "perhaps the most important literary critic in the English-speaking world," a "subtle and original" thinker, whose faith in the supernatural is something that can no longer be shared by any "first-class mind" and is "sadly symptomatic of the feeble condition" of contemporary thought. Mr. Eliot is in a feeble condition and hasn't a first-class mind but he is, nevertheless, "perhaps the most important literary critic in the English-speaking world." Such confusion of thought is so unusual with Mr. Wilson that it can only be attributed to the hypnotic influence upon him of Mr. Eliot's own habitual confusion.

Edmund Wilson's treatment of Eliot in the article referred to above is, I regret to say, "sadly symptomatic of the feeble condition" of Wilson's critical rationales and practises. In

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1925 Wilson applauded critics like Mencken and Brooks for unloosing America's creative energies, for prodding our writers into moods of expansiveness and self-expression. A year later Wilson found most of the end-products of catalytic criticism sadly wanting either in passing interest or permanent value. In 1925 Wilson pooh-poohed Paul Elmer More's long-standing belief that writers should distrust, or at least more rigorously curb, their emotions. When Eliot, much later, says the same thing, the dictum becomes a critical gem serene. When More damns washy, unbridled romanticism, he is going against both literature and nature; when Eliot pontifically echoes More, literature is purged and criticism adorned.

This matter of the writer's relations to society has plagued Wilson for years. Of late, reading him on this subject, one article or review at a time, he usually seems fairly definite and decisive, in fact, bristlingly doctrinaire, in a broad, general way; but reading him over a period of months, one can only conclude that he has been led astray by the "foolish" in Emerson's "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

In his recent paper on A. E. Housman, Wilson concluded:

> And he has somehow managed to grow old without in a sense ever having come to maturity. He has somehow never arrived at the age when the young man decides at last to try to make something out of this world he has never made.

In an article on John Jay Chapman (*New Republic,* May 22, 1929), Wilson said:

> He is a peculiarly isolated figure. . . . He illustrates more clearly and picturesquely than perhaps any other contemporary American the peculiar position in America of the man of high moral and intellectual standards who is unable to compromise with American life. Chapman is too violent, too fastidious and too honest to become a popular writer or a successful politician. . . . To his solitary position, he probably partly owes the unique freshness and independence of his point of view. . . . In asserting the importance of the individual in a democratic world, in maintaining the point of view of the humanist in a world occupied with trade, Chapman has paid the penalty of being almost forgotten by that world.

Judging from the above, had Wilson chosen to write of Housman in 1929, he might very conceivably have made many of the same key-points about Housman—his independence, his Olympian impatience with mediocrity, his intense aloofness from the world of trade—that he did make about Chapman. And, characteristically enough, when Wilson writes of Chapman again eight years later, he scolds him, in all Wilsonian consistency, for not making more of a world that, like Housman, "he has never made." Neither Housman (ever) nor Chapman (for long) would have been in place editing the *New Masses,* and Wilson knows it.

Earlier, Wilson observed that Chapman, like Eliot, has become preoccupied with religion, but where Eliot is an Anglo-Catholic, Chapman is an extreme Protestant. Chapman, according to Wilson, believes that every man is to interpret the Scriptures for himself. "We are," paraphrased Wilson, "to depend not upon any Church but upon the religious instinct of the individual." After quoting Chapman's religious views at some length, with obvious respect if not complete acceptance, Wilson commented:

> And when we first read him on this subject, we find that we are unable to share his hopes. We ask ourselves where he sees the evidence of anything describable as a general religious movement. . . . The only thing of which we are plainly aware is a greatly gifted and indomitable individual of a singular spiritual authority, who, in a society where it is peculiarly difficult for taste, courage and faith to survive, has shown how a single man may preserve them. Yet we recognize the world he writes of—it is the world we have to reckon with, too. And we, too, have our hopes about it. Perhaps Chapman's hopes and our own have, after all, something in common—and perhaps he has seen deeper than we.

And just one month before in the review of Eliot already referred to, Wilson had said:

> Now, no one will dispute that the world . . . is badly in need of the sort of ideals which the Church was able formerly to supply; but it seems to me that the objection to Eliot's position is simply that the Church is now practically impossible as a solution to our present difficulties because it is so difficult to get educated people to believe in its fundamental doctrines—and that, even if a few first-rate men like Eliot manage to convince themselves that they do accept them, one cannot see how they can honestly contemplate the possibility of a renaissance of faith general enough to make the Church intellectually important again. I agree that, without a Church, you cannot have anything properly describable as a religion. . . . You cannot have real Christianity without a cult of Christ as the Son of God. But since it is plainly becoming more and more difficult to accept Christ in this rôle [the rôle in which Chapman accepted Him], it seems that we must do without both the Church and religion.

Anyone who has the temerity or second sight to draw valid inferences regarding Wilson's ideas about the relevance of religion to our present-day world, during the period from April 24 to May 22, 1929, will have the line forming at the right all to himself. Wilson asserted that "we must do without both the Church and religion." He meant, of course, that we must do without both the Church and the Church—and without Chapman.

A few months ago, Wilson observed of one of his contemporaries:

> We expect of him an intelligible basis of taste and an intelligible general point of view. He sounds as if he were being discriminating in his discussion of the relative merits of books, yet the standards by which he judges them remain obscure; he sounds

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> as if his strictures on other people's doctrines were based on some deeply thought out philosophy of which he was very sure, yet though we keep on reading him in the interested expectation of finding out what that philosophy is, the revelation never breaks.

Whether or not Bernard DeVoto's answer to Wilson's accusations was wholly satisfactory either to Wilson or to America's large body of critical second-guessers does not concern me now. What does concern me, now, is the literal applicability of the statement quoted above to the critical practises of Edmund Wilson. In view of Wilson's critical confusions, his about-faces, his backings and fillings, his exhortations first to this and then almost immediately to its diametrically opposed that, many of his readers have just about given up all expectations of finding in his writings either "an intelligible basis of taste" or "an intelligible point of view." I am still reading him, but no longer in the hope of finding out what his philosophy is.

In the *New Republic* for December 11, 1935, Wilson (by now he is almost notorious for his "farewells") dismissed Proust as "that arch-bourgeois, arch-snob, arch-esthete and arch-decadent." This is what Wilson said of that arch-bourgeois only a few years ago:

> In each of these cases, Proust has destroyed, and destroyed with ferocity, the whole social hierarchy which he has just so learnedly expounded. Its values, he tells us, are an imposture: pretending to distinction, it accepts all that is vulgar and base; its pride is nothing nobler than the instinct it shares with the woman who keeps the toilet. . . . And whatever the social world may say to the contrary, it either ignores or seeks to kill those few impulses toward justice and beauty which make men admirable . . . the fact that Proust had never had to write for a living, and that he was able to command unlimited leisure, brought with it the immense advantage of making it possible for him to plan and carry through a work of the most ambitious kind. . . . "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu" is one of those bold and self-dependent works, produced in absolute indifference to popular standards and commercial expediencies, which make the principal glory of literature [*New Republic,* March 21, 1928].

This is what Wilson said of that arch-snob only a few years ago:

> . . . One of the things which strikes us most is his capacity for keeping in intimate touch with various circles of friends, as with various fields of activity, sympathizing with the emotions, understanding the interests, and following the affairs of each . . . and, in spite of all his parade of weakness, in spite of all his masks and indirections, of a character of singular magnanimity, integrity and strength . . . [*New Republic,* February 12, 1930].

This is what Wilson said of that arch-esthete only a few years ago:

> It seems almost inconceivable that there should have been critics to describe Proust as "unmoral." . . . Proust was himself (on his mother's side) half-Jewish; and for all his Parisian sophistication, there remains in him much of the moral indignation of the classical Jewish prophet. That tone of lamentation and complaint which pervades his book, which, indeed, never deserts him, save for the amazing humor of the social scenes, themselves in their implications so bitter, is really very un-French and in the vein of Hebrew literature [*New Republic,* March 21, 1928].

This is what Wilson said of that arch-decadent only a few years ago:

> The day of his death . . . he called his maid at three in the morning and dictated to her some supplementary notes on the death of the novelist, Bergotte—remarking, when he had finished, that he thought what he had just composed was good. It is at the death of Bergotte that Proust's narrator, in what is perhaps the most exalted passage of the book, asserts the reality of those obligations, culminating in the obligation of the writer to do his work as it ought to be done, which seem to be derived from some other world, so little sanction can we recognize them as having in the jumbled and desperate world of humanity. But the effort of dictating resulted in the bursting of an abscess in Proust's lung, and the next day he was dead [*New Republic,* February 12, 1930].

In 1932 Wilson contributed to the *Nation's* "What I Believe" series. Among other things, he said that he admired

> . . . the Russian Communist leaders, because they are men of superior brains who have triumphed over the ignorance, the stupidity, and the short-sighted selfishness of the mass, who have imposed on them better methods and ideas than they could ever have arrived at by themselves.

He declared that he was interested in the "intellectual" type of brains rather than the "acquisitive." He said that the spectacle of seeing the whole world being run fairly and sensibly, as Russia is now run (Stalin was running it then, too) would more than compensate for any personal losses he might sustain in the process.

Wilson insisted in this article that the discussion of all other matters must wait until social, political and economic problems have been definitely settled. He took no stock, he said, in the idea that before making over society we should be sure of the values that we are sanctioning.

> Until these little matters of property which are at present poisoning all classes and occupations are finally cleared up, there can be no "values" in general morals, esthetics or metaphysics that amount to anything.

The "finally" is most staggering. One shudders to think what our present world, bad as it is, would be like had this advice been given, and generally taken, two thousand years ago.

Five years later (*New Republic,* January 20, 1937) Wilson turned savagely on the objects of his slightly earlier affections. "One of the worst drawbacks of being a Stalinist at the present time," he virtually snarled, "is that you have to defend so many falsehoods." After quoting Louis Kron-

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enberger to the effect that "it is less important that the search for truth should survive than that the cancers of society should be cut out; but it is important enough," Wilson said:

> At what point does the "search for truth," which is "important enough," become less important than "that the cancers of society should be cut out"? . . . Or does it merely mean that we may "put the right social values ahead of the right literary values"? . . . The root of the difficulty here may be seen . . . in Mr. Kronenberger's use of the word "right." What he really ought to arrive at is a point of view from which it would be possible for him to say that for himself certain things are right and certain other things are wrong.

After this piece of schoolmastering (a habit that Wilson has been denouncing for years in critics like Babbitt and More), Wilson added:

> The times, it is true, are confusing. Certainly it is hard for people to know what to do. But one thing that is certainly not worth doing is formulating theoretical positions.

If the two passages of Wilson's just quoted do not cancel each other, then I can't read English. And I am not at all sure that Wilson's "Mr. Kronenberger ought to arrive at . . . a point of view from which it would be possible for him to say that for himself certain things are right . . ." is either sound communistic doctrine or safe democratic principle. It sounds more like rugged Anarchism to me.

However, Wilson probably doesn't believe "finally" in what he is saying at the present stage of his critical and intellectual somersaulting, because back in 1932, the years of his cart-before-the-horse insistence upon the absolute right-of-way of social and economic matters, he also made the following statements about the American scene:

> Yet our society, for all its great buildings, its great feats of engineering, its great newspaper reputations, its great millionaires, has been a socially flimsy affair. For all its magnitude, built up so quickly on what had just before been a wilderness, it has not grown out of an older society and we haven't the moral and intellectual roots which in older nations serve to keep people's minds steady when social changes are taking place. . . . The mind can disintegrate steel and stone as it can pump life into the desolate plains, and make them homes for human beings. But the mind must first remake the mind. . . . What we need now are engineers of ideas as drastic as our practical ones.

The above statement, if it means anything in particular, means that certain values, moral and intellectual, are indispensable to a humane society. And it further means that it is highly desirable to "formulate theoretical positions."

Wilson concluded his recent attack on the present state of affairs in Stalinist Russia, already quoted from, with these words:

> You may say, "This is no time for art or science: the enemy is at the gate!" But in that case you should be at the gate: in the Spanish International Brigade, for example, rather than engaged in literary work. . . . Imaginary bombs kill no actual enemies . . . and, on the other [hand], the development of a war psychology prevents one's real work from having value.

Just how much logical connection there is between the foregoing and the following (taken from a review of W. H. Auden in the February 24, 1937, issue of the *New Republic*), I shall leave to the decision of the reader:

> It looks as if the group . . . had lapsed, after their first lift of enthusiasms for the clean sweep of society promised by Communism, of repudiation of the world to which they belong, into a period of relaxation into vagueness, of cooling down and marking time. . . . When this brilliant and engaging young student [Auden] first came out so strongly for the class struggle it seemed a bold and exhilarating step; but then he simply remained under the roof of his nice family and in the classroom with his stuffy professors; and the seizure of power which he dreams of is an insurrection in the schoolroom by the students.

It would seem that Nemesis has begun to close in on Edmund Wilson, because he had to end the review with this parenthesis: "(I have just learned that Auden is driving an ambulance in Spain.)" Since Wilson, too, has momentarily at least lost his militant enthusiasm for Russia's clean sweep, and like Auden of the review, if not like Auden of the parenthesis, has relaxed into vagueness and marking time, he is, at present writing, one ambulance down to Auden in the game of clean sweeps.

So many of Wilson's words seem so much more applicable to himself than to their subjects, that we sincerely wish the following tribute to an American critic could be paid to its author:

> He [Paul Elmer More] seemed to me that day very clear-cut against the background of the college community. He was himself not really typical of the American academic world: he was an independent scholar, who had denounced in the most vigorous language the lack of sincerity and incompetence of the colleges. He stood out, not merely through his distinction of learning . . . but by reason of his intense seriousness, his stubborn insistence on the importance of maintaining in one's criticism a consistent position which would face moral problems realistically, his refusal to allow himself to be seduced by purely esthetic or intellectual satisfactions.

The reasons for (and the measure of) Edmund Wilson's failure as a critic of literature and life are fully contained in the above quotation. A university press will always have its long-time advantages over magazines and weekly reviews as an assured outlet for consistent, independent, completely rounded literary criticism—literary criticism based on a realistic understanding of human nature and fortified by steadfast devotion to the canons of common decency and common sense. Unfortunately for a large number of potentially first-rate American critics, posterity is not interested in bread and butter extenuations; it is interested only in first-rateness.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

CARLETON BEALS describes in the July number of *Harper's Magazine* the network of Nazi propaganda and the German intrigues of both political and economic types which are so rapidly spreading over Latin America. In certain of the South American countries, according to other observers, there is a similar activity directed by the Italian Fascists. And of course it is well known how widely the marvelously skilful proselytism of Communism has been promoted in Mexico and Central and South America. In short, there is being transferred to the western world, to all of America, both North and South, the same conflicts which are raging in Europe and in Asia, and which in certain countries, notably in Spain and China, have passed from the stage of propaganda into warfare. It is certain that in America too there will be revolutions and warfare if the flood of foreign propaganda is not overcome. The "good neighbor" policy of the United States is designed to deal with this situation. The increase of good-will and cooperation among the governments, but especially among the peoples of North and South America, is the great task of statesmanship now confronting the leaders and the molders of public opinion in the New World. It is most sincerely to be hoped that a great part will be taken in this work by Catholics. No stronger unifying force could be employed to keep the nations of America from being perverted by any form of totalitarian state, or class, or racial tyranny than the traditions and the teachings of Catholicism.

It is for this reason that I venture to recall the fact that THE COMMONWEAL published some years ago, in its issue for January 18, 1928, a remarkable plan advocating a Pan-American Catholic Congress. The plan attracted some favorable attention, but it did not result in action along the lines advocated. Perhaps at that time the plan was premature. At any rate, the need for it was not so evident as it is today. The plan itself was drawn up by Dr. Julio Betancourt, who died some years ago. He was a highly distinguished citizen of Colombia, who had served his country as Minister to the United States, and Spain, and the Vatican. Dr. Betancourt was a layman, and although in his lifetime he discussed his ideas with prominent churchmen, his plan was in no sense officially ecclesiastical. It was put forward in the hope that the competent authorities would take cognizance of it and promote it if it seemed wise to do so.

Dr. Betancourt's plan called for delegates from all the countries of the New World, both clergymen and laymen, and outlined a comprehensive series of discussions to be followed by the formation of permanent committees to work for greater cooperation along practical lines among the Catholics of all the countries concerned. The following extract from Dr. Betancourt's plan gives the gist of his ideas:

"The difficulties and needs (which are crying) of the present moment call upon Catholics to organize for the purpose of formulating a program of action for practically supporting the Holy Father in his sacred mission of re-establishing Christian order.

"The Catholic Congress, while dealing with questions within its sphere of the spiritual life, would also undertake to study the methods and proceedings best calculated to establish on strong and durable foundations the union and solidarity of Catholics, in whatever refers to their temporal interests and the development of their civic prosperity, and to endeavor to bind together intimately their relations among the American republics so as to procure the guarantee of peace among all, and their progress and mutual well-being.

"The Congress shall devote special attention to the judicial questions regarding the Church and the study of plans leading to the proper settlement of social problems. The Congress shall also study the means to be adopted by Catholic Americans to fulfil their obligations toward the Catholic missionaries not only on this hemisphere but in Asia and Africa as well.

"In brief, the work of the Catholic Congress shall be in every sense in accord with the highest civilization.

"We entertain the hope that all who profess the Catholic faith will welcome this project and will labor earnestly to realize it.

"When the Zionists of the United States and other countries can organize definitely to bring about their supreme aspiration of establishing in Palestine a free Jewish state, it seems that we Catholics cannot be excused from gathering up our forces so that the Church may fulfil her divine mission in restoring the moral bases of social and international life. If the Hebrews of the United States have been able to collect millions of dollars and to send representatives to the different allied nations in favor of the Zionist program, with much greater reason and greater ease should the seventy millions of Catholics living on the hemisphere of Columbus bring to a happy realization the project we announce for the benefit of all mankind.

"Once our forces are organized with a careful foresight—leaving nothing to chance nor postponing the duty of today until tomorrow—we shall strive to affirm by every human means and with the Divine assistance, the leadership and social sovereignty of Jesus Christ, Who is the fountain of good, of peace, of progress, of all civilization that is true and complete."

Communications

RACISM

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The *Catholic Worker* published in its last issue an article, "Little Known Letter of Rome." It seems surprising that this letter, sent in May of this year from the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities of Rome to Catholic universities and teaching faculties of the Church all over the world, should have been practically ignored by the Catholic press, with a few exceptions as, e.g., *Der Deutsche in Polen*. To me this is proof that Catholics all over the world, with excep-

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tion of a few courageous fighters, whose voices have not been heard in the wilderness, are not realizing the grave danger which is threatening our civilization at large by the false dogmas of "race superiority" and "pure blood."

The Church as a whole has always been an ardent defender of the natural law, which adjudges equal rights to all men and all races. "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus" (St. Paul, Galatians, iii, 28). This natural law has been strengthened by the supernatural law, which makes still higher demands upon Catholics to adjudge every child of God its rights, because according to the Will of God all are called to become members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

How is it possible then that Catholics seem not to realize their duty? Have they learned nothing from events in Germany? Or are they unaware of the things going on there?

Comparing conditions in today's U. S. A. with those in Germany in 1928, the writer cannot help being shocked by the duplication of events. Ten years ago, German students started to demonstrate against the Jewish element as being non-German, and requested its exclusion in the most vehement terms.

At that time the writer had long, sometimes heated discussions with the members of various Catholic student organizations in attempting to make them realize their responsibility to fight these inhuman, godless attacks against the natural and the moral law. But even the argument that negligence on the part of the Catholics in not fighting for the natural law, would deprive them of the moral right of defense and assistance, if the Nazis should wage war against the Catholic Church, had no other reaction than ridicule or accusations of pessimism. Their firm conviction was: "It can't happen here."

Ten years later, the prevailing attitude in the U. S. A. is: "It can't happen here."

Few Catholics are realizing the danger, fewer are aware of the danger signal sent from Rome. Yet, the battle is on. Now is the time to fight. Now is the time for Catholics to realize that the rights of every human individual are given by God, not by the State. Now is the time for all of us to realize that all races have the same God-given rights to exist. Now is the time to realize what functions the State has: it does not create these rights, but has the duty to uphold, and never to suppress, these rights, nor to withhold them from any one group.

Now is the time to fight. Unless Catholics do rise to the seriousness of the situation: *it can happen here.*

STEPHANIE HERZ.

THE WORLD GODLESS CONGRESS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I am very much perturbed over the probable holding of the World Godless Congress in New York during 1939. I am in possession of positive information from European correspondents that the Congress intends to convene here next year.

In September, 1938, the Godless Congress will meet in London. Cardinal Hinsley warns that in England "social disorder" will probably result. He says: "We don't want any Bolshevist Russian Congress in this country. . . . Anti-God politics which have wrought such havoc in other lands will not be favored by the freedom-loving people of England. . . . If our government cannot, or will not, imitate Belgium and prevent the proposed Atheistic Congress in London, they are at least forewarned and I hope forearmed . . . in this country there are very great numbers whose religious convictions are outraged."

Very Reverend Francis A. Walsh, O. S. B., of the Catholic University, feels "a deep sense of consternation that such a grievous insult should be offered to the Divinity . . . cannot allow a blasphemous group of this kind to usurp the public view. . . . It is the duty of Catholics to make known their horror . . . at the fact that this iniquity is to be perpetrated."

The Anti-God Congress will build up a vast apologetic for the cause of atheism in every newspaper and news agency in the land. The damage to souls of sceptical youth will be incalculable.

All Catholics should vigorously protest the advent of such a Congress in America.

REV. PAUL B. WARD, C.S.P.

CLOISTERS WITH MONKS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Hudson Falls became high hat when loudly it discarded its ancient name, and by popular vote flung historic "Sandy Hill" into the river. That was several years ago. Today a few antique walls on Main Street show streamlined facades. The town's sense of importance may shrink as the "D. & H." steams by its abandoned station.

Farther up the river, and in the foothills of the Adirondacks, Chestertown retains the quiet of stage-coach days, and rests contentedly in old-fashioned environment. Ecclesiastically, it is an "Out-Mission" of North Creek. Architecturally, its new church bears no resemblance to its mother, or to its distant relative where the parish priest resides. Nor does it conform to the modernistic trend; and for that reason is worth a visit from tourists hurrying to Lake Placid or Canada. It is dedicated to the saint of the wilderness—John the Baptist. The temporary furnishings are from the old edifice: their ugliness marks them intruders within new walls which are of stone both exterior and interior. One will have to travel far to see a finer timbered roof; the pilgrim can enjoy the strong and graceful Gothic lines outside and inside.

Like St. Mary's at Hudson Falls, St. John the Baptist's enjoys a fortunate site facing the village plaza, confronting every passerby on the mountain highway. Its seating capacity is less than three hundred, which is reached only in the summer months. Though the cost was moderate, its building was a brave adventure.

The church at Hudson Falls, also of varied stone, is more important in proportions. Its architecture replaces

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the diocesan Gothic built upon the same location. In all respects it is a very satisfying building; ornament is well restrained. It is good to find aisle flags underfoot; the humility of the pavements would be lost in linoleum. An amateur might label St. Mary's and St. John the Baptist's "Cloister Gothic." Of different Gothic schools, they have at any rate the cloister feeling.

Facing the same square in Hudson Falls is St. Paul's where the French Canadian congregation worships. It is a very close neighbor to the "Irish" Church, and is not easy to classify architecturally. Its interior is a parable of the ubiquitous "ecclesiastical atmosphere" about which Mr. Walter Knight Sturges wrote in "Cloisters without Monks" (THE COMMONWEAL, June 17).

The lesson which both new churches impress, in their village and town, is that tradition is not outmoded; that honest materials intelligently used are beautiful; that sincerity is a mirror of the spiritual, which needs no garish frame to be "devotional"; that design for an old religion in a new age need not go haywire over streamlined forms, which may satisfy Radio City, Sears Roebuck, or the World's Fair; that our altars should not suggest chromium lunch counters; that our saints were not born freaks, and their canonization did not mold them into pagan effigies; that casting away the splendid heritage of centuries of faith is like flirting with heresy; that a House of God should not resemble an Eden Musée, a Trolley Terminal, or a Turkish Bath; that when we enter a church portal its purpose is not to bulge our eyes, but to bend our knees. Surely, a divine religion with sacramental life demands a temple with a character all its own.

REV. PETER MORAN, C.S.P.

OUR ANCIENT HERITAGE OF SONG

Annapolis, Md.

TO the Editors: I came into the Church via Presbyterianism, in which I was born, and Anglicanism, in which I was brought up. When I was quite young I remember the grandeur of the chanted Psalms, the "Magnificat" and the "Nunc Dimittis," and especially the "Oh Saving Victim opening wide," which is our "O Salutaris Hostia." I remember that we used to content ourselves with the consideration of the glories of Anglican music in comparison with the sentimentalities of Moody and Sankey, etc. That superiority, we thought, was one of the marks of the true church. The hymns we loved were Catholic and most of them ancient and the knowledge of their provenance showed us the way out of the dark wood.

Now when I became a Catholic I heard the sublime "Dies Irae" often and the chanting of the Preface and the Pater Noster at Mass and the angelic "O Salutaris," but the sound of the psalter chants was stilled. I did not hear them for the space of twelve years until I was brought into contact with the Benedictines. The "Magnificat" and the "Nunc Dimittis" I have heard but half a dozen times in the twenty-three years I have been a Catholic. As for the old Catholic hymns, the twelfth-century "Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest" of Bernard de Morlaix of Cluny and the still older "Oh mother dear Jerusalem" and "Art thou weary, art thou languid" of Saint Stephen, they are only to be heard in Protestant churches.

I make bold to say in all loyalty that we Catholics, Esau-like, lay aside lightly our richest treasures of song and in their stead we sing second-rate, evangelical-sounding hymns like "Oh Mother dear, please pray for me" and "Oh Holy Name." I concede that with time and association even these hymns grow cherished and we are loath to displace them. But cloying words and tunes are hardly consonant with the spirit of the Church which is robust and joyful and strong like the fire of Saint Francis.

I have never heard the "Salve Regina" chanted. Why is it not? It is one of the most beautiful prayers to Our Lady. An acquaintance of mine visits a certain town in France solely for the joy of hearing the Trappists sing it as they march with lighted tapers to choir in the evening. Dante heard the souls singing it in Purgatory.

I realize that we have no canons in our cathedrals, that the Divine Office is said at odd moments by a busy, often overworked clergy. But still the faithful are urged to attend devotions where the singing, though it may be pleasing to God and Our Lady, must surely be less so than the far nobler chants which, when they are not the inspired work of the Holy Ghost, are the work of great saints who were at the same time great poets.

W. A. P. MARTIN.

CARTOONS

South Pasadena, Calif.

TO the Editors:

Cartoons
(Subjective?)
What *is* Charlot after?
Surely not our "girlish laughter"
Nor a sardonic grin.
He finds the world "not funny"
Yet makes our outlook sunny
Though most times pretty grim.
And, once, in "Catholic Action"
He nearly brought a tear.
What boots this silly question?
His art is all sincere.

AGNES M. WORTH.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: After reading the letters of Joseph A. Brady and Helen Cash, I realize how necessary Charlot's cartoons are.

When I first saw the cartoons I wondered how they would be received by your readers. Do these two objectors think it is un-Christian to say the truth? Heaven forbid! Then because they do not think these cartoons are nice, they cancel their subscriptions. A cartoon gets at the essence of the situation and tells the truth forcefully and simply. We need more of Charlot's cartoons.

JULIA PORCELLI.

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Points & Lines

The Market Rationalized

THE TREMENDOUS stock market week, ending June 25, was greeted throughout the country with vast pleasure. The New York *Times* summed up the rise:

> That the averages for stocks should have risen 14⅜ points—the largest advance of any week since 1929—that they should have been brought 23½ points above this year's low level and within 3 points of January's highest, was interesting enough. . . . Sometimes such demonstrations merely mean that a market was "oversold," and that the speculative position was being corrected. . . . But it may have been stimulated—it usually is, on such occasions—by purchases from genuine investors, who were recovering securities sold at higher prices in the autumn. . . . The market's action last week was based on hopes of trade revival in the autumn.

The more specialized *Barron's* commented:

> But the amazing uplift in values is chiefly the result of a wave of emotional buying, and operations in an emotionally governed market are subject to greater than normal speculative hazards. . . . No sustained rise can long flourish without businessman buying of stocks. Yet, no buying whatsoever from mercantile or industrial sources can be detected. . . . Fundamental developments, however, were all to the good. On the credit side there is the Eccles victory over the conservatives with respect to the treatment of bond valuations by banks, the effect of which is to eliminate the possibility of serious portfolio losses. It drives another nail in the already solid structure of easy credit. At the same time, prospects brighten for a continued flow of new financing this summer. But the major development was the open slash in steel prices, which has in the past on notable occasions heralded the dawn of business recovery. It was the action most devoutly desired by the motor industry. . . .

The *Annalist* went into money and interest conditions:

> It is possible that the present upturn in business activity represents an important cyclical turning-point. . . . On the whole, though money conditions are admittedly abnormal, the behavior of various series of statistics indicative of money market conditions has recently been similar to that witnessed in the past prior to or concurrently with general business recovery from severe depression. . . . The weekly business index has increased two weeks in a row and is now about 2 points above the recent low point of 75.0 for the week ended June 4. . . . Another method of gaging an important cyclical turning-point is to observe the extent to which, if at all, revival has occurred in industries that in the past have shown a tendency to recover early in the business cycle. Of these the cotton textile industry is probably the most important. [Wool, silk and autos are acting the same way.] The *Annalist* Wholesale Price Index reached a low point June 1, whereas our sensitive price index continued to decline until June 14.

Business Week is careful:

> The factors which brought about this week's sudden upheaval on the financial front were anything but obvious. Pretty substantial buying came into stocks right at the beginning on Monday morning and touched off the rise. Adjournment of Congress was probably the largest single inspiration for that rise. European buying aided the rise, but currency devaluation no longer was a dominant factor. . . . It is too soon to say, however, that the tide has turned. There are too many depressing factors still at work to be sure that the low in either business or prices is behind us. If consumers' goods activity does pick up sooner than expected, it will be in part offset by continued dullness in the capital goods field. It would not be prudent to expect a significant pick-up in the general indexes of activity this side of Labor Day.

Britain's Defense Plans

THE LATEST weapons have not substantially altered England's traditional problem of self-defense, although her former tactics must be modified to meet certain new contingencies, according to Sir Henry Page Croft, M.P., writing in the *Weekly Review*, which has incorporated *G.K.'s Weekly*:

> Sea power . . . remains our first concern if this country is to resist invasion and if food for our people is to reach us. Fortunately we have the naval force to defeat any two European nations in a fleet action. . . . One of the first considerations must be the preservation and extension of the British Mercantile Marine. . . . Plans should be completed to arm every merchant ship with one or more anti-aircraft guns, according to size, for which platforms should be constructed on each ship, and also machine guns.

The work of building up defenses continues at an impressive pace. Mr. Cross, Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade, replied to charges on the decline of British shipping before the House of Commons:

> The Board of Trade has under constant review plans for ensuring that all necessary steps could be taken in an emergency to regulate the British mercantile marine, plans to secure neutral ships and plans to secure the highest output of new ships from our own yards.

The task of laying in war reserves of vital raw materials is well under way according to the *Manchester Guardian*, citing discussion before the House of Commons on the Essential Commodities Reserves Bill:

> Sir Thomas Inskip, Minister of the Coordination of Defense, said that the commitments already incurred in respect of the purchase of wheat, whale oil and sugar amounted to about £7,500,000.

An indication of impending speed-up of airplane productions, which is to be supplemented by many planes from abroad, is found in a dispatch from a correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*:

> Lord Nuffield has not delayed in starting preparations for the $3,000,000 factory he is to erect at Birmingham for the manufacture of airplanes for the British government. The Birmingham City Council has agreed to provide him with a site of 130 acres at Tyburn bordering on the Castle Bromwich airdrome. . . . The scheme is intended to apply mass production methods as far as possible to the making of airplanes.

An Associated Press report indicates plans for air defense:

> The British government . . . announced the appointment of a "dictator" for air raid precautions and he was confronted immediately with charges that too much prominence had been given to society women in this work. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain informed the House of Commons that Geoffrey Lloyd, thirty-six-year-old Under Secretary of State for Home Affairs, would devote his whole time to air raid precautions involving the training of civilians to meet war-time attack from the skies.

The spirit of the British nation is indicated by the *Christian Science Monitor*:

> In the event of a major war . . . Britain would concentrate attention on the Navy and the Air Force and a highly efficient but moderately sized expeditionary force for use at

ST. CHA... CARTHAGE, OHIO

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strategic points. Even if such a plan were tenaciously adhered to, the fact would not be altered that the whole man power of Britain would ruthlessly be turned to work which would be none the less war work because done at home.

Great Britain apparently still means business.

Buy and Give

IN LAST week's COMMONWEAL Secretary Wallace succinctly stated the policy of the SCC:

> By means of the Surplus Commodity Corporation we have in considerable measure brought food, which otherwise would have rotted, to the mouths of the people who otherwise would have been undernourished.

A few weeks ago it was announced that the WPA had allocated $10,000,000 to buy surplus stocks of clothing, after Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, had stated that such a plan would give jobs to thousands of clothing workers. Thus the principle of government purchase of surpluses for relief purposes spreads from food-stuffs to other fields. The New York *Times* editorially condemns the whole idea:

> The general rule, depending on the phase of the business cycle that the country happens to be in, is for either "shortages" or "gluts" to seem to appear in every industry at once. How is the government going to choose which gluts to relieve? If cabbages and clothing, why not excessive stocks of liquor, publishers' unsold volumes, empty theatre seats? . . .
>
> The government's choice, in fact, is likely to be influenced by political rather than purely economic considerations. This tendency is already evident. The FSCC has been mainly confined to buying up the "surpluses" of the politically sacred farmer, and the purchase of clothing is being planned chiefly as the result of the pleading of a politically powerful labor union. The danger that the "buy-and-give" movement may become just one more political weapon, making particular industries more dependent on government than now, is obvious.

John T. Flynn in the *New Republic* also expresses his unhappiness with the scheme:

> . . . If this is a good policy for the dress manufacturers, it is also a good policy for the makers of shoes and shirts and socks and stockings and woolen goods; for the dealers in steel and coal and aluminum and chemicals; for the manufacturers of furniture and carpets and jewelry and millinery and hardware and, in fact, of everything. No possible reason can be advanced for its employment in one industry and not in another. And if it is employed in all, then the government will find itself buying the surplus products of all industry.

The *New Republic* makes clear its own editorial disagreement with this criticism:

> One trouble is that we have a system in which more than a fair share of the burden falls on the really competitive industries, while others cannot be made to compete. The clothing industry is about as far from monopolistic as any industry could be. If competition in it were carried to its logical conclusion, the result would certainly be sweatshop wages and hours. We think Mr. Flynn's objection would have more point if the WPA were buying surplus steel or cement.

It might also be pointed out that, after all, the immediate needs of persons on relief has so far acted as a conditioning factor in determining what surpluses the government will buy.

The Stage and Screen

The Season's Plays

THOUGH the season just ended has been anything but a brilliant one for the native dramatist it has had several encouraging features. It has seen the establishment of the Mercury Theatre under the consulship of Orson Welles and John Houseman, a theatre which has at last given New York a home for the classic drama and in Mr. Welles has revealed a director of imagination and ideals; it has given to us three exquisite Catholics plays, "Father Malachy's Miracle," "Shadow and Substance" and "Murder in the Cathedral"; it has proved that the New York public is tired of erotic vulgarity and is eager to welcome the spiritual note in its drama; it has revealed much admirable acting, of which I shall speak next week.

The Mercury's presentation of "Julius Caesar" in modern dress was an exciting and imaginative *tour de force;* its production of "The Shoemaker's Holiday" vital and amusing, though in places unfortunately coarse; its revival of "Heartbreak House" splendidly done. Mr. Welles and Mr. Houseman have begun magnificently. We await with intense interest the development of their idea.

Brian Doherty's dramatization of Bruce Marshall's novel, "Father Malachy's Miracle," was accomplished with unusual skill and sympathy, and the non-support of this splendid play by Catholics was lamentable. The play like the novel is imaginative and deeply spiritual. Paul Vincent Carroll's "Shadow and Substance," however, was a great success because of the patronage of non-Catholics. It too is a beautifully written and innately spiritual play, despite its somewhat vague ending. T. S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral" was given two seasons before by the Federal Theatre Project, but except for Harry Irvine's magnificent interpretation of Becket it was inadequately done. This year the English company gave it a beautiful production, and once again Catholics failed to support a truly Catholic play. Yet we at least can be proud that the three most original plays of the year were charged with the Catholic spirit, even though the author of "Murder in the Cathedral" is a High Church Anglican.

Aside from Mr. Eliot's tragedy, the three most interesting American plays were John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men," a powerful and human drama which did not need the coarseness of some of its language for success; "Our Town," Thornton Wilder's tender re-creation of a New England town, notable for its verity of atmosphere and its unusual production without scenery; and "On Borrowed Time," Paul Osborne's skilful dramatization of Edward Watkins's novel, a play which, while distinctly of the theatre, possesses tenderness and spiritual glow. None of these plays are masterpieces, but they are all worth while.

The better-known American dramatists were either silent, or what they gave us was of little importance. Maxwell Anderson's "The Star-Wagon," Sidney Howard's "The Ghost of Yankee Doodle" and S. N. Behrman's "Wine of Choice" were all distinct disappointments, while Clifford Odets's "Golden Boy" was only inter-

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mittently good, and Rachel Crothers's "Susan and God," while starting out effectively, went to pieces in the last act. There were, however, two interesting revivals—Chekov's "The Sea-Gull" by the Lunts, and Maugham's "The Circle" by Tallulah Bankhead and Grace George. The former was especially well done. Giraudoux's "Amphitrion 38" was well produced by the Lunts, but was the only really salacious play to win popular success. In short, not a brilliant but in some ways an encouraging season.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Women Get Their Men

CRINOLINES, colored folk's singing, live oaks and Southern chivalry are the background for Luise Rainer in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "The Toy Wife." But even Miss Rainer's strenuous efforts cannot redeem this fake New Orleans story by Zoe Akins. A child-like, pleasure-loving, empty-headed belle, Froufrou believes that no girl can have any fun without a husband; then, without any understanding of the responsibilities involved, she accepts Melvyn Douglas's offer and merrily dances herself and her family to disaster. Except for Barbara O'Neil, who is beautiful and sincere as the elder sister, Miss Rainer gets very little support from the rest of the cast. Her own acting is up to its usual high standards only in the last half of the picture.

Well, the much-discussed first American picture with Danielle Darrieux has been made. It is no "Mayerling," but let's let the comparisons slide because we're going to hear a lot of them in regard to this French star's first work in Hollywood. In "The Rage of Paris," Universal Pictures has surrounded Miss Darrieux's charm and fragile loveliness with an excellent cast: Douglas Fairbanks, jr., Helen Broderick, Mischa Auer, Louis Hayward. The story isn't anything to write home about, but it is a light and diverting comedy with plenty of laughs; and the people in it act as if they knew what they were doing and seem to have lots of fun doing it. Miss Darrieux is goaded by Helen Broderick and Mischa Auer into the business of hunting a rich husband, and Mr. Fairbanks makes it his business to see that his good friend Louis Hayward isn't that man. It all has a Hollywood sort of sparkle and goes along at a fast pace, occasionally not careful enough as to where it is going, with Miss Broderick punching her lines and popping her eyes with more than her usual effectiveness. It would be advisable to leave the children at home, even though the moral is that gold-digging doesn't pay.

There are an alarmingly large number of films lately that concern themselves with girls who are frankly out to get rich husbands. In Twentieth Century-Fox's "Three Blind Mice," it's three sisters, led by Loretta Young, who decide it's just as easy to fall in love with a rich man as a poor one. They invest a $5,872 inheritance to buy a lot of clothes for Miss Young; then she starts to work on Joel McCrea and David Niven. "Three Blind Mice" is light comedy, with some clever lines. It becomes downright good when Binnie Barnes as Mr. Niven's beer-drinking sister makes things fly. Exhibiting a flair for high comedy, Miss Barnes steals the show.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Day

Sanctions and Substitutes

Cooperation or Coercion? by L. P. Jacks. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

MANY of the criticisms leveled today at the League of Nations are simply old ones reenforced by recent experience. Among them this forceful little book attacks those provisions of the Covenant which provide for the coercion of an aggressor nation.

In the first or "critical" half of his argument, Mr. Jacks says that coercion is unworkable for a variety of cogent reasons. Not only does he think that these provisions create a "fighting alliance" if interpreted in an "orthodox" manner, and furthermore that they direct the attention of League members to military preparedness rather than to necessary economic cooperation, but he also holds that the creators of the League built it upon the model of the existent political state without considering whether that form is best fitted to effect freedom and justice, whether within the nation or among nations. He argues ably that international order rests solely on mutual good faith among nations, and that it must perforce fall apart whenever an armed state pursues contrary nationalistic policies.

In the second or "constructive" half of his discussion, he proposes to substitute for war a powerful diversion from war, in the form of an international fund for furthering necessary international economic cooperation, with regard to currencies, tariffs, financing the distribution of raw materials, promoting international social services, and assisting nations affected by natural calamities. He would raise this fund from the amounts obtained by proportional and progressive disarmament. With the hope that the United States would be then attracted into a newly functioning League of Nations, he argues that the coercive provisions should be taken out of the Covenant, so that the League itself would be completely disarmed. He ends his argument by an examination of the relationship between the United States and the component states of the Union, to draw whatever analogies may be possible for use in redrafting the Covenant—with the conclusion that the founding Fathers deliberately avoided provisions for coercion of the parts.

Although an extended discussion of his thesis is impossible here, some questions raised by it remain unanswered. It might work if tried, but similar ideas offered during the past ten years have been ignored by national states, refused by governmental heads. Mr. Jacks says that disarmament must precede the establishment of order; if he believes that our greatest danger is from great nations who will refuse to submit to coercion in fact if not in theory, what basis has he, in our day, for thinking that such states will look kindly on disarmament? The cost of arms seems not to have dismayed the rulers of such nations. Quite obviously he thinks that powerful states have tried and will try to pursue nationalistic policies while avoiding economic or political responsibility for these policies. Will his fund create that responsibility? If so, will it be accepted? He seems further to underestimate the moral bases of such international law as has governed the behavior of states from the fifteenth century to the World War. His argument attacks the faults of an international system on mechanistic and pragmatic

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grounds, without at the same time attacking the economic nationalism of the peoples and rulers of the nations. Like most of those who try to compare the situation among the national states in 1938 with that among the colonies in 1787, he overlooks the effect of the common possession of the western lands and the common fighting in the united armies on the willingness of the colonists to submit their interstate disputes to a court of the United States. He still believes that with all its weaknesses the League of Nations is the most valuable institution of the world today, secondary in its potentialities only to a hypothetical "Universal Church in which men of all races and ways of thinking could find their spiritual home and unite in one fellowship of loyalty and good-will," which he goes on to say, "does not at present exist"; but "one day it may come into being." Catholics who support the League of Nations will agree with the author on many points, but this is not one of them. Though a system of international funding may work better than one of coercion, neither will work well until there is a change of mind and of will among the teeming multitudes who inhabit the earth. One day, in future time, the personal responsibility of each for the welfare of all in the "World Community" will be brought home to them. More than nineteen centuries of the slow spread of Christianity have seemingly done little to effect this, but who can read the human heart? No international organization can offer a record in any way the parallel of the Catholic Church.

Any reasonable suggestion for improvement of present international institutions merits thoughtful reading. This book should be carefully read and reread.

ELIZABETH M. LYNSKEY.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Future of Freedom, by Douglas Jerrold. New York: Sheed and Ward. $2.50.

THIS is an essay in Christian political prudence. It is an attempt to discern and "command" means necessary, in view of present-day conditions, to arrive at a Christian society. Hence, Mr. Jerrold recalls the nature of Christian society and the basic conditions of its existence; he defends it against attackers who consider it merely a passing stage in the evolution of man or who claim that it has produced such evils as to merit no further allegiance. He next considers and rejects the alternative of a secularist society in as much as it is fatal to a veritably human life. Mr. Jerrold then discusses the relationship to a Christian society of democracy, dictatorship, riches and poverty, leisure, fascism, peace and war, and the League of Nations. Finally, after risking various tentative prophecies regarding Europe, Russia and the United States, the author offers some conclusions respecting the definite political tasks incumbent upon contemporary Christians by reason of his findings.

All this is treated with great sweep and gusto and assurance, and it is a real pleasure to meet in Mr. Jerrold a Catholic who has tried to know what all our contemporary world is about, who names names, who proposes positive and definite political programs and measures, and who writes with a glowing pen. In fact, it is such a treat that one hesitates to find fault. But there are times when assurance makes up deficiencies of factual knowledge and shoddy thinking replaces the usual keen analysis. Certainly Mr. Jerrold does his personal friend General Franco no service in defending the Spanish Nationalist cause by the following dialectic:

"Since it is the Italian and Portuguese dictatorships which are actively supporting General Franco, it is necessary to assume (if we assume anything at all as to the character of General Franco's intended government from the policy of his allies) that his policy will conform in the matter of religious liberty and the religious character of the state to the Portuguese or Italian rather than to the German model. There is thus, on the practical plane, not only an answer but a complete and crushing answer to those who say that Christians cannot support General Franco because of his alliance with the dictators. If we are to judge by allies Christians not only can but must wish and pray for General Franco's success" (page 115).

Mr. Jerrold's lapses are sad because they are found amidst many brilliant insights that need utterance and are brilliantly said.

HARRY MC NEILL.

CRITICISM

Mark Twain's Western Years, by Ivan Benson. Stanford University, Calif.: Stanford University Press. $3.25.

MARK TWAIN'S writings were often autobiographical, and he told a great deal about his life to his friends. But his style, rich in burlesque and exaggeration, and his character as raconteur, make all this material exceedingly difficult for the biographer, who is the more anxious to know just what happened, since the life is a literary source. The inspiration of Mark's very best work came from his youth in Hannibal and his life on the river; but his development as a writer, and his early reputation came from his life in the far West in 1861 to 1866.

This latter period is the one to which Mr. Benson devotes his study, and he has enlightened it by the discovery of many newspaper articles by and about Mark, which make the truth clearer, although the still missing files of the Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise* leave some blanks that may some day be filled in. However Mr. Benson has some articles reprinted in other papers from this, and has seen some clippings preserved by Mark. He is thus able to tell more about Mark's duel which did not come off, and from other sources establishes that Mark's debt to Captain Sellers, from whom he took his pen-name, amounted to little else.

He reprints many of the new items, and they show that Mark had his characteristic rhythm and bantering mock apologetic style well formed in the sixties, but that he had not yet attained his absolute mastery of easy narrative. However in his "Farewell to the West" with which the book concludes we have a prophecy of his intensely serious style, though only a prophecy. Mr. Benson rightly points out that "The Jumping Frog" is a small masterpiece, but I think wrongly rejects the idea that Mark's petrified man hoax owed something to his friend Dan DeQuille's frozen man hoax. His book is well written and highly entertaining reading for all the solidity of its scholarship.

THOMAS OLLIVE MABBOTT.

Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins including his Correspondence with Coventry Patmore; edited by Claude Colleer Abbott. New York: Oxford University Press. $6.00.

WITH the publication of "Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins" the editing of the principal sources for the study of Hopkins draws to a close. In 1935 Claude Colleer Abbott edited "The Letters of Gerald Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges" and "The Correspondence of G. M. Hopkins and R. W. Dixon,"

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while in 1937 Humphrey House edited "The Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins" comprising the important journals, sermons, commentaries and miscellaneous papers. Mr. House is now writing a critical biography to supplement the invaluable introductory study by Father G. F. Lahey.

Only a definitive edition of the poems, incorporating Hopkins's early verses and correcting the chronology of his later work and setting forth textual variants, is needed before the public will have sound editions of all the primary sources for further study of the thought and art of one who is steadily calling for more careful analysis and critical evaluation.

The present volume, edited with meticulous care by Mr. Abbott, includes all the known extant letters other than those to Bridges and Dixon. Here may be read his correspondence with his undergraduate contemporaries and with Pusey, Liddon and Newman. Here also are some thirty letters, covering a span of twenty-five years, to his life-long friend Alexander Baillie. But of greatest interest is his correspondence with Coventry Patmore whom Hopkins met some six years before his own death. To the Jesuit, Patmore submitted his poems for criticism. "Your careful and subtle fault-finding," he acknowledged to Hopkins in one letter, "is the greatest praise my poetry has ever received." However, few of Hopkins's two dozen letters to Patmore are devoted to "fault-finding," for the sensitive and analytic mind of the priest-poet frequently rises to a consideration of the larger issues involved in the relationship between art and prudence, poetry and priesthood. Both correspondents emerge with heightened poetic and religious ideals. JOHN PICK.

DRAMA

Representative American Plays, From 1767 to the Present Day; edited with introductions and notes by Arthur Hobson Quinn. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. $5.00.

THIS is the sixth edition of Dr. Quinn's invaluable anthology of American dramatic literature, which includes twenty-nine complete plays. In the new edition Maxwell Anderson's "Winterset" has been added, the useful introductions to the other plays have been brought up to date, and the bibliography of American drama has been entirely revised.

Anyone who desires to make for himself a historical survey of the development of the American theatre will find the book made to order for that purpose, and its academic usefulness is manifest. Many old plays not otherwise available appear in the collection, and an indication of its representativeness is afforded by the fact that it includes plays by O'Neill, Rachel Crothers, Philip Barry, Sydney Howard and Anderson among the moderns.

MASON WADE.

Robert's Wife: A Comedy in Three Acts, by St. John Ervine. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

THE THEME of dual marital careers is as old as the New Woman but Mr. Ervine has given new impetus to the idea by making the ambitions of both husband and wife impersonal. The Reverend Robert Carson is a clergyman of unusual caliber, beloved of his Bishop, and his wife, Ursula Carson, M.D., is the head of a Clinic for Women and Children. When the Bishop suggests Robert to the Prime Minister for the next deanery, Ursula is neither willing to desert her clinic nor curtail

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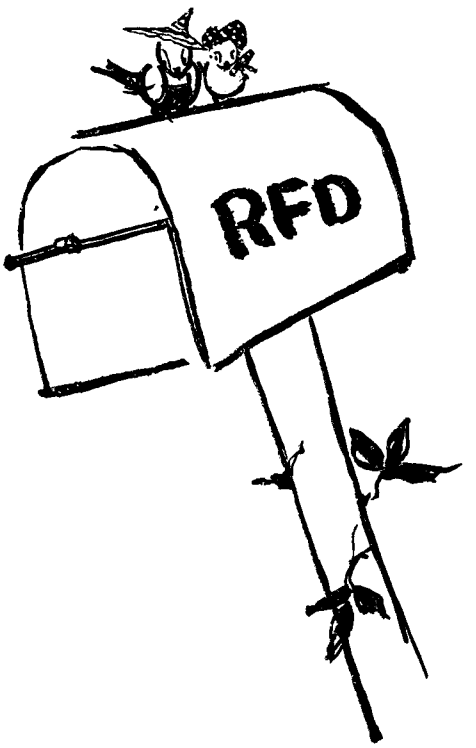

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her birth control propaganda which is prejudicing her husband's appointment. Robert, on the other hand, is so unselfish that he takes a stand for the clinic against the High Church party. A singular solution is reached when a rich spinster, who loves Robert secretly, offers to endow the clinic if Ursula will resign. The Bishop is delighted for, although he is very uncertain about birth control and divorce and pacifism, he is positive that while it's easy to find a substitute for a doctor, it's impossible to replace a good parish priest. Even Robert admits that his work is, in most respects, more important than his wife's and reminds her tactfully: "I shouldn't be a priest if I didn't think a man's soul of greater value than his body."

From this it is evident how extremely tolerant all the characters are of one another with the exception of Father Jefferson, the celibatarian Anglo-Catholic, whose views are obviously the only ones toward which Mr. Ervine holds any animus. Mr. Ervine still has a bad habit of opening scenes with an explanatory parlor maid but his characters are always distinct and in this case all of them are people one is interested to meet. He does fall into the usual error of accusing the medieval Church of forbidding dissection; but the Bishop confesses he is very worried about the Church of England "into which the majority of young people never put their feet."

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

FICTION

Spring Is a Woman, by Natalie Shipman. New York: Greystone Press. $2.00.

THIS little novel isn't as bad as one would expect from its title. It tells the story of Anthony Vane, a middle-aged artist, who marries Laura because he thinks he and she have a great deal in common. Really he marries her because it is convenient, she is a tenant in his red farmhouse, and he is lonely after the death of his first wife, who had been beautiful, rich and demanding. Matters are complicated by his "clear-eyed, self-controlled, cynical" daughter, Carol, who is now grown up and whom Anthony is learning to know for the first time, and by Jan, with whom Anthony falls in love, and who puts him straight about himself.

Natalie Shipman knows her Connecticut, in which she sets her novel, very well; and her descriptions are refreshing. However her book and her people have an air of too much politeness. She herself is like Anthony, the artist, who says, "I'm definitely old-fashioned. Picasso and the men who came after him might as well not exist." For her, Joyce, Huxley and Hemingway might as well not exist, and we might still be living in the time of Myrtle Reed.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

MILITARY SCIENCE

Machine Guns: Their History and Tactical Employment, by Lieutenant-Colonel G. S. Hutchison, D.S.O., M.C. London: MacMillan and Company. $7.00.

COLONEL HUTCHISON'S purpose is threefold—to present a concise history of the machine gun; to write a more detailed account of the British Machine Gun Corps in the late war; and to support a thesis for the tactical employment of the weapon. Even if his book were excellently arranged and written, its interest to the general reader would be questionable, though it would form a valuable addition to a military library. Unfortunately, it is marred by poor organization, discursive writing and important omissions.

The clearest and best arrangement is found in the early history, where a paucity of material keeps the Colonel's head above water. Here one misses particularly a description of mechanical improvements and their effect upon tactical capabilities. In the 1914-1918 period, the author is swamped: although he disclaims an intention to organize his subject by types of military operation, he also departs from chronological order. The result is confusion. Moreover, his narrative consists largely of personal reminiscences. In spite of his insistence on the importance of machine guns as a third firearm and of the coordination with infantry and artillery fires, he has not given us a detailed study of the preparatory staff work and battle orders needed to produce this coordination.

His tactical thesis emerges clearly. On the one hand, the French mitrailleuse failed in 1870 through its employment as light artillery. On the other hand, in 1914, the machine gun was treated purely as an infantry auxiliary. The solution is to be found in the formation of a separate arm, with its own traditions and training, tactically organized in large units, and capable of providing centralized control of indirect supporting fires, closely coordinated with those of the light artillery and infantry weapons. Clear distinction must be drawn between the machine gun and the automatic shoulder rifle.

Here we miss any discussion of post-war history, save the bare statement that the Machine Gun Corps was disbanded, but that certain infantry battalions have recently been rearmed as machine gun units. Why, for example, did the British Army abandon its war organization? Why did the Americans give up their machine gun battalions? What is the contemplated employment of the new British machine gun battalions, and what the machine gun armament of the proposed American division? What are the doctrines of the continental powers? What lessons have been learned in China, Ethiopia and Spain? Colonel Hutchison gives no answer.

JOHN F. FISKE.

SCIENCE

The Evolution of Physics, by Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

IN RECENT years, several books have attempted to make the latest development of physics understandable to laymen, like those of Eddington, Jeans, Darrow and now that of Einstein and Infeld. Darrow's excellent book is mainly concerned with newly discovered phenomena. Eddington and Jeans are written like novels and widely read, but both contain quite a bit of subjective ideas and many exaggerations useful to attract the readers' attention, but not calculated to give a balanced view. The present admirable book is quite different; sober, systematic, although well written, it so to speak takes the reader by the hand and shows him the development of the principle ideas of physics step by step.

The authors, as anybody acquainted with their work knows, are firm realists. To them scientific progress is like reading a mystery story. The aim of science is the investigation of a reality outside ourselves, "physical theories try to form a picture of reality." That standpoint is held throughout and only the wording on the last few pages seems to me somewhat misleading.

The bulk of the book shows how the ideas prevalent in physics were formed by the state of factual knowledge of the time, how an increase in factual knowledge often forced the reluctant abandonment of the old and acceptance of new views.

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They show how unaided observation led naturally to Aristotelian mechanics, how experiment and astronomy gave birth to Galileo's and Newton's work. This success, strengthened by the kinetic theory of matter, gave rise to the mechanistic view which hoped to explain all physics by the motion of particles, acted upon at a distance by forces only depending on that distance. The rise of electricity, particularly in Maxwell's theory, whose most spectacular result was the prediction of radio waves, showed the futility of these hopes and focused attention on the field as separate entity. The attempts to ascribe this field to the properties of a mechanical ether failed and had finally to be given up on account of the experiments which led to theory of relativity. Almost half of the book is devoted to a detailed discussion of these fundamental points, followed by a short (unfortunately too short for this reviewer) chapter on quanta.

The book shows admirably the method of physics, how in its history the physicist often appears to be driven into a corner by apparently contradictory experiments and how the way out is found in a close inspection of the assumptions. It then turns out that one assumption that had been taken uncritically for granted, has to be dropped.

It is not often that somebody who has himself been responsible for so much fundamental work as Einstein has succeeded in writing such an excellent book for the general public. KARL F. HERZFELD.

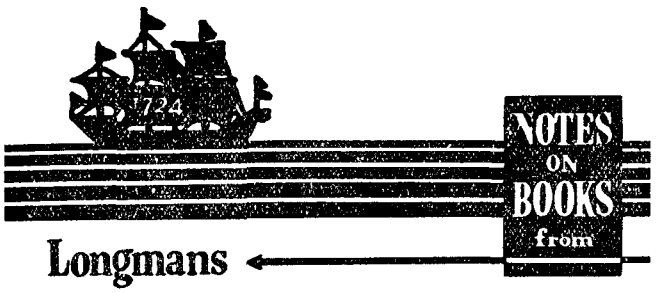
The Life of Chevalier Jackson: An Autobiography. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

"AN ARCHBISHOP in the Catholic Church who had seen much of bronchoscopic work with little children said to Dr. McCrae: 'The things that have impressed me . . . are his gentleness and endless patience. . . . Oh, what endless Christlike patience!"

You will not read the first two chapters of this book without finding that Dr. Jackson's sensitiveness to pain inflicted on others is hyper-acute and that to him was given the most determined and diabolical schoolboy torture. "The tearfulness of my boyhood and childhood hangs like a pall over everything." Read through these pages drenched with woe and you will be rewarded as you watch the emergence of the character that has contrived more creative surgery than anyone else alive today. His life at home was one of perfect sympathy with wife, parent, child, but abroad he "never had an intimate friend, never a confidant." He was introduced into adult life as a book agent and as cook on a Gloucester fisherman. Such an apprenticeship tempers a man. From it emerged this gentle indefatigable creator of the esophagoscope and the bronchoscope. He never learned to charge his patients fit fees. He never learned to dissimulate.

The simplicity—in the scholastic sense—of this record is overwhelming. In these silly days when the medical profession is tempted to try to lift itself by its own bootstraps any physician might ponder these pages with profit and learn that at least one man in the profession did not "kill the thing he loves."

The literary style of such a work is inevitably of the simplest but because of its directness is thoroughly convincing. Dr. Jackson was throughout his life the old-fashioned country practitioner set in the front lines of creative surgery and specialization. There are a number of illustrations in color to show his unusual talent with the brush and many charming vignettes from his pencil. EDWARD L. KEYES.



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The Inner Forum

CANADA'S first national Eucharistic Congress opened in Quebec on Wednesday, June 22, and continued through Sunday, June 26. J. M. Roderigue Cardinal Villeneuve, Archbishop of Quebec, had been appointed papal delegate for the occasion. The opening ceremony took place in the Quebec armory on Wednesday evening, when government and ecclesiastical officials welcomed Cardinal Villeneuve. It is estimated that very nearly one-half of Canada's population today is Catholic, of which about 70 percent is French-speaking. Hence a considerable part of the proceedings of the Congress took place in French. It is a testimony to those who organized the Congress that although the population of the city was very nearly doubled by visitors, the ceremonies were carried out without any disorder, and at most of the open-air Masses everyone present was able to find a seat.

The principal events of the Congress took place on the Plains of Abraham, the site almost two centuries ago of the decisive battle between French and British troops for the possession of Canada. No finer natural setting could be imagined for a great religious celebration. There is ample space for the assembling of a very large crowd—it is estimated that 100,000 persons assisted at one of the out-door Masses. The ground is almost level and is elevated several hundred feet above the St. Lawrence River, with horizons to the north and east of distant mountains. The whole area is a public park, handsomely planted with trees and shrubs. The first pontifical Mass took place on the morning of June 23; that night at midnight, Mass was celebrated for 100,000 men by candle-light, all of the men receiving Communion in the space of about twenty minutes. Friday afternoon was dedicated to study-club meetings and discussion of the liturgy as well as to the presentation in the open air of Henri Ghéon's "The Mystery of the Mass." Saturday's events were marred by rain, but on Sunday 200,000 persons took part in the closing ceremonies.

CONTRIBUTORS

Agnes REPPLIER is the author of many books, of which the latest is "Eight Decades."

T. Swann HARDING is the author of "Fads, Frauds and Physicians," "The Joy of Ignorance," and "TNT, Those National Taxeaters."

John Abbot CLARK is a member of the department of English of Michigan State College of Agricultural and Applied Science, East Lansing, Mich.

Elizabeth M. LYNSKEY is chairman of the Social Relations Committee of the Catholic Association for International Peace and assistant professor of political science at Hunter College, New York City.

Harry McNEILL, of the faculty of Fordham University, is a contributing editor of THE COMMONWEAL.

Thomas Ollive MABBOTT teaches English literature at Hunter College, New York City, and is the author of "Paste Prints."

John PICK is in the department of English at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.

Mason WADE contributes to current periodicals.

Euphemia Van Rensselaer WYATT is the dramatic critic of the *Catholic World*.

John F. FISKE is a Captain in the U. S. Army.

Karl F. HERZFELD is professor of physics at the Catholic University of America.

Edward L. KEYES, M.D., is a distinguished member of the medical profession.

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